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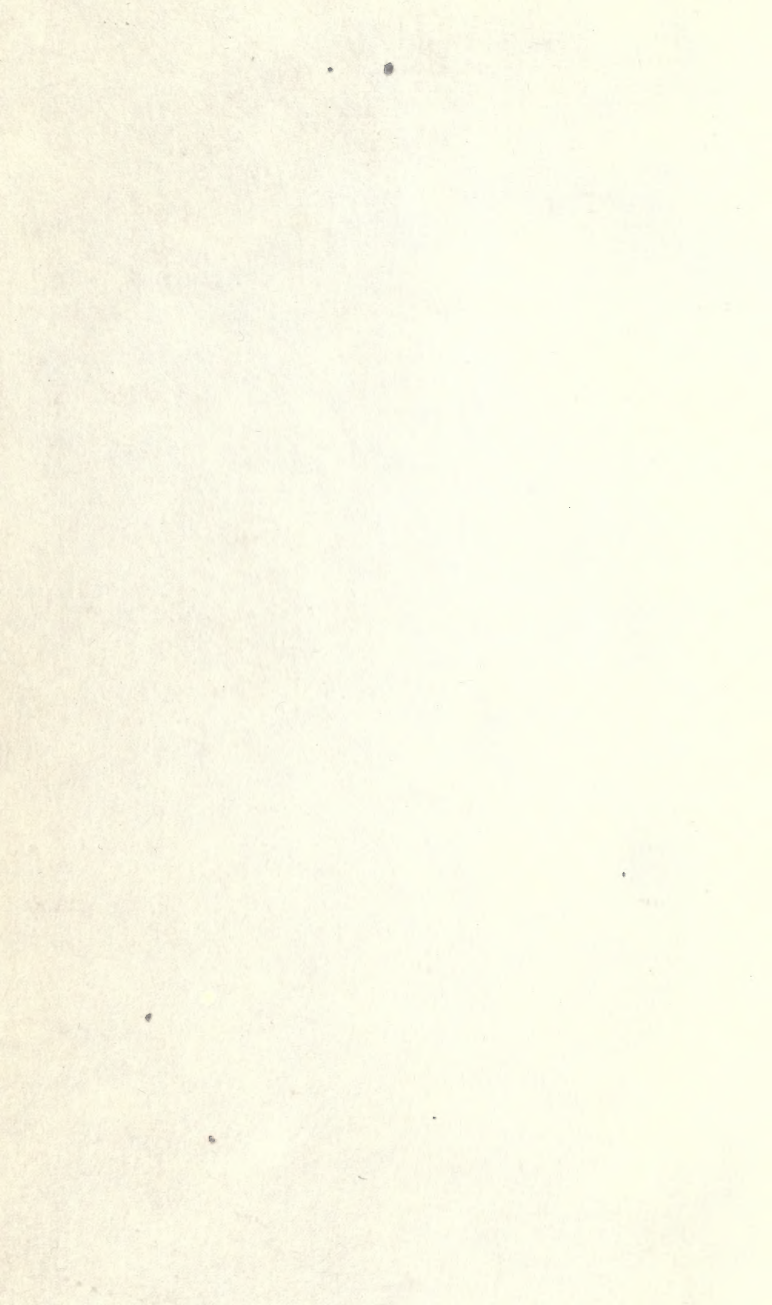














A  
V I E W  
OF THE  
CAUSES AND CONSEQUENCES  
OF THE  
AMERICAN REVOLUTION,  
IN  
*THIRTEEN DISCOURSES.*

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*THIRTEEN DISCOURSES,*

Preached in NORTH AMERICA between the Years 1763 and 1775:

WITH AN HISTORICAL PREFACE.

BY

JONATHAN BOUCHER, A. M. AND F. A. S.

Vicar of EPSOM in the County of Surrey.

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..... "At verò cùm a strepitu tumultuque aures nostræ paulu-  
lùm conquieverint, quid tandèm causæ est, cur de republicâ quid  
"sentiamus taciturnitate diuturniore celemus?"

Præfat. ad Bellendenum de Statu, &c. p. xv.

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L O N D O N:

PRINTED FOR G. G. AND J. ROBINSON, FATHERNOSTER-ROW.

M.DCC.XCVII.

V I E W

TO THE

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CAUSES AND EFFECTS

OF THE

# AMERICAN REVOLUTION;

IN

THIRTEEN DISCOURSES

PREACHED AT THE ANTI-SLAVIC SOCIETY, NEW-YORK, 1824

WITH AN APPENDIX

BY

JOHN H. WATSON, A.M.

NEW-YORK: PUBLISHED BY G. & C. VAN NEST, 1824.

THE  
AMERICAN  
REVOLUTION

NEW-YORK: PUBLISHED BY G. & C. VAN NEST, 1824.



TO

George Washington Esquire,

*OF MOUNT VERNON,*

*IN FAIRFAX COUNTY, VIRGINIA.*

SIR,

IN prefixing your name to a work avowedly hostile to that Revolution in which you bore a distinguished part, I am not conscious that I deserve to be charged with inconsistency. I do not address myself to the General of a Conventional Army; but to the late dignified President of the United States, the friend of rational and sober freedom.

As a British subject I have observed with pleasure that the form of Government, under which you and your fellow-citizens now hope to find peace and happiness, however defective in many respects, has, in the unity of its executive, and the division of its legislative, powers, been framed after a British model. That, in the discharge of your duty as head of this Government, you have resisted those anarchical doctrines, which are hardly less dangerous to America than to Europe, is not more an eulogium on the wisdom of our forefathers, than honourable to your individual wisdom and integrity.

## DEDICATION.

As a Minister of Religion I am equally bound to tender you my respect for having (in your valedictory address to your countrymen) asserted your opinion that "the only firm supports of political prosperity are religion and morality;" and that "morality can be maintained only by religion." Those best friends of mankind, who, amidst all the din and uproar of Utopian reforms, persist to think that the affairs of this world can never be well administered by men trained to disregard the God who made it, must ever thank you for this decided protest against the fundamental maxim of modern revolutionists, that religion is no concern of the State.

It is on these grounds, Sir, that I now presume (and I hope not impertinently) to add my name to the list of those who have dedicated their works to you. One of them, not inconsiderable in fame, from having been your fulsome flatterer, has become your foul calumniator: to such dedicators I am willing to persuade myself I have no resemblance. I bring no incense to your shrine even in a Dedication. Having never paid court to you whilst you shone in an exalted station, I am not so weak as to steer my little bark across the Atlantic in search of patronage and preferment; or so vain as to imagine that now, in the evening of my life, I may yet be warmed by

## DEDICATION.

your setting sun. My utmost ambition will be abundantly gratified by your condescending, as a private Gentleman in America, to receive with candour and kindness this disinterested testimony of regard from a private Clergyman in England. I was once your neighbour and your friend: the unhappy dispute, which terminated in the disunion of our respective countries, also broke off our personal connexion: but I never was more than your political enemy; and every sentiment even of political animosity has, on my part, long ago subsided. Permit me then to hope, that this tender of renewed amity between us may be received and regarded as giving some promise of that perfect reconciliation between our two countries which it is the sincere aim of this publication to promote. If, on this topic, there be another wish still nearer to my heart, it is that you would not think it beneath you to co-operate with so humble an effort to produce that reconciliation.

You have shewn great prudence (and, in my estimation, still greater patriotism) in resolving to terminate your days in retirement. To become, however, even at Mount Vernon, a mere private man, by divesting yourself of all public influence, is not in your power. I hope it is not your wish. Unincumbered with the distracting



## DEDICATION.

cares of public life, you may now, by the force of a still powerful example, gradually train the people around you to a love of order and subordination; and, above all, to a love of peace. "Hæ tibi erunt artes." That you possessed talents eminently well adapted for the high post you lately held, friends and foes have concurred in testifying: be it my pleasing task thus publicly to declare that you carry back to your paternal fields virtues equally calculated to bloom in the shade. To resemble Cincinnatus is but small praise: be it yours, Sir, to enjoy the calm repose and holy serenity of a Christian hero; and may "*the Lord bless your latter end more than your beginning!*"

I have the honour to be,

S I R,

Your very sincere Friend,

And most obedient humble Servant,

JONATHAN BOUCHER.

EPSOM, Surrey, }  
4th Nov. 1797. }

## P R E F A C E.

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THE separation of Thirteen British Colonies in North America from the Parent State is, in many respects, one of the most remarkable events of modern times : till the present revolution of France, it was, in some points of view, without a parallel in the history of the world. The downfall of the ancient monarchies was preceded by causes, and effected by means, which were not wholly inadequate to the event. To their tyranny the Tarquins owed their expulsion; and to a system of government, which was at once oppressive and feeble, Spain may ascribe her loss of Holland and the kingdom of Portugal. But there was no such concurrence of adequate causes to produce the defection of America.]

Nor is it the least remarkable circumstance in the history of this defection, that, as though eclipsed by a still greater event of the same kind, which has succeeded it, it seems already well nigh forgotten: or else, a great political revolution is now regarded as so very ordinary an event, that, however it may agitate the world whilst it is passing, when passed it merits being recorded merely as a common epoch. Of the American revolt it is certain no history has yet been compiled by any writer of eminence. It is true, several have attempted it—and with abilities, it may be, not inadequate to the task: but they have failed, from not having made it a part of their plan to trace to any considerable extent either its causes or its consequences. These writers therefore, it is probable,

will think it no reflection on them not to have performed what they did not undertake. Yet, without such investigations, even novels, when well written, may be not less instructive than real history; which is preferable to fiction only from it's exhibiting a view of the fermentations and conflicts of human passions and human reason, drawn, not from the imagination, but from real life.

The want, however, of a spirit of philosophical investigation is by no means the strongest objection that may be urged against the historians of the American revolt. A much more material objection is, that (with hardly a single exception) they have been party-writers. Some bias and some leaning towards particular principles, and even towards particular men, it would hardly be a merit, if it were possible, in any political writer not to have. An historian is ignorant or negligent of his duty only when his work appears, in its most prominent features, to have been written with the direct view of serving the purposes of his party.

The first of these historians in point of time is the Rev. James Murray of Newcastle upon Tyne. So early as 1778, during the war, he published, what he called, "An impartial History of the Present War in America," in 2 vols. 8vo. This history, besides being extremely partial and inflammatory, is so very ordinary and mean a performance as to be totally undeserving of criticism or animadversion.

In 1785, John Andrews, LL.D. published an "History of the late War," in 4 vols. 8vo. This work appears to have been compiled from news-papers and other periodical publications, immediately *on the spur of the occasion*. It exhibits little personal knowledge either of the controversy or of facts—no acuteness of observation, nor any marks of deep and close thinking; and seems to take part with the Americans, only because theirs was then become the popular side, and because also the author found the largest stock of materials



rials on that side already prepared to his hands. With all these drawbacks, I consider this as a less partial and more faithful compilation than any general history that has yet been presented to the public. This year also produced "*Histoire des Troubles de l'Amerique Anglois, par François Soules ;*" with a Dedication to Lord Percy. This book is in 2 vols. 8vo. ; and written with great professions of disinterestedness and impartiality ; but is evidently the work of a writer who had no opportunities of obtaining any other information than the public papers supplied, nor any extraordinary depth or clearness of judgment to enable him to appreciate even such information with competent skill. In this prolific year of 1785, there also appeared "*The History of the Revolution of South Carolina from a British Province to an Independent State,*" by David Ramsay, M. D. member of the American Congress, in 2 vols. 8vo. This, as well as the same author's "*History of the American Revolution,*" in two thin 8vo vols. printed in 1791, is a work of great merit in point of composition : the author is, undoubtedly, a man of sense, and not illiterate ; but his histories are no less clearly the productions of an avowed partisan of the revolt, who is by principle a puritan and a republican\*.

It was not till 1788 that a work of great profession and promise, the design of which is avowed to have been conceived in 1776, and was announced to the public even before the termination of the war, was printed. It is intitled "*The History of the Rise, Progress, and Establishment of the Independence of the United States of America ; by William Gordon, D. D. in 4 vols. 8vo.*" That this work is at least decently written will be readily acknowledged, and also with more information, and perhaps more fairness,

\* See p. 5. vol. i. of the latter work, for proofs of his predilection for puritanism ; and every page in both his histories, for proofs of the great interest he takes in revolution and democracy.

than any of the author's predecessors have to boast of: but it must also be acknowledged, that (resembling in this some much more celebrated histories by another eminent Doctor of the same Church and Country as Dr. Gordon) it was palpably written on purpose to be sold. Of course, the author combats no popular opinions or prejudices: he appears indeed very seriously to think that the *Vox Populi* is truly *Vox Dei*; and, assuming it as a fact, that the voice of the people of America was in favour of the revolt, in being it's advocate, he cannot be charged with sacrificing any sentiments of his own merely to his passion for popularity.

I know not how far I may be permitted, with propriety, to reckon 2 vols. in 8vo. of "Travels in North America in 1780, 1781, and 1782," by the Marquis de Chastellux, as historical, and relating to the revolution. Never was an author more fortunate in a translator: it appears to have been the steady purpose of both author and translator to conciliate the regards of the people of America, not only by flattering them, but also by vilifying the people of Great Britain. In pursuing this purpose, their confidence in assertion is hardly more conspicuous than their want of candour; and, like infidels in general, their credulity in believing Americans possessed of every virtue is as remarkable as their incredulity in disbelieving any testimonies in favour of Britons. Their shameless partiality, however, has defeated it's own end: the book has now sunk into very general neglect, owing no doubt to it's author's having so very little accurate knowledge of the character, the circumstances, or the politics of the people, of whom it professes to give a faithful account.

That authors, with no better pretensions than these, to whom declamation is as natural as a consistent narrative and fair impartial reasoning are difficult, should thus uniformly have chosen the popular side, is no more than might have been expected: but that the highly and justly esteemed

writer,

writer, to whom the world is indebted for the historical article in the Annual Register, should have lent his aid to give some prospect of permanency to the mere party colourings of distempered times—and should, instead of obtaining an honourable niche in the temple of Fame, be contented to be classed with an ignoble herd, the party writers who abetted that revolt—is a subject of regret to every man who knows the value of literary reputation.

This writer, like many others of his sect, knows well how, without subjecting himself perhaps to a charge of any direct falsification of facts, to exhibit a fallacious representation of things. His method is to bring forward, with great care and zeal, all that is in favour of the party whose cause he espouses; whilst, with no less care and zeal, he keeps back every thing that is adverse to it. The objections and cavils of the Opposition are stated in their utmost strength; but he hardly deigns to notice how constantly and satisfactorily the futility of their objections was shewn by the friends to Government. I well remember, that, for a long time, the compilation of this part of that valuable periodical publication was attributed to Mr. Burke. This surmise (of which no secret was made) no one ever confirmed or refuted by any direct and clear avowal or disavowal. But whether the compiler was, or was not, Mr. Burke, or connected with Mr. Burke, it will hardly be denied that he has taken the same line of conduct as that great man: No individual defended the American revolution, or reprobated that of France, with more zeal than Mr. Burke. And the historian in question, according to his abilities, (which were not over-rated even when his productions were laid at the door of Mr. Burke,) has done the same.

During the continuance of the contest, it seemed to be a part of the warfare, that each party should misrepresent and vilify both the cause, and the espousers of the cause, of their opponents. This, it is probable, is in some degree



the case in all wars: but the propensity was particularly strong and virulent in the American war; and was the more inexcusable, as both parties, even in the moment when they were most guilty of it, were conscious that their indiscriminate abuse of each other was unwise and unjust, and such an indignity as, I sincerely believe, either of them would have resented if practised by any but themselves. But it should be recollected, that the American war was not a war of conquest, or to repel insult or aggression, but merely a party contest: and who does not know that misrepresentation and abuse are the usual weapons of the partisans of parties? In speaking of party in this case, I speak indiscriminately of all those persons who in any manner abetted the cause of the insurgents, or took part with the friends of Government—with but little consideration of the side of the Atlantic on which they dwelt. Indeed I know not how, with any shew of justice, to dissociate the views of the actual revolvers in America from those of their abettors in Europe: if we may judge from their zeal and their exertions, their interest in its issue must have been equal. The former, it is true, in addition to their inflammatory speeches and writings, fought in defence of their cause: still it is not easy to determine whether more was done in America or in Europe to promote its success.

Much to the credit, however, of both parties, the meanness, the malignity, and the mischievousness of this petty kind of war have now long been discontinued: and the great body of the people in both countries now have the spirit, as well as the wisdom, to speak of each other as there is reason to believe they always thought. And, in God's name, let the contrary conduct be left to those numerous swarms of restless men, who are as naturally engendered in free governments, as serpents and other fierce and noxious animals are in warm climates! To such men it is a sufficient objection

tion to the whole of any government, that in some of it's parts it is imperfect, and in any instance corrupt: their taste, like their talents, is directed only to the pulling down; and their reforms terminate in destruction. They are also as active and persevering as they are dangerous. Those of them who reside in Great Britain, taking pleasure only in revolutions, unsatiated with that of America, and even with it's gigantic offspring, the revolution of France, have long been, and still are, equally industrious in fostering a similar spirit of discontent and disunion in our sister kingdom of Ireland: and their brethren, the malecontents of America, were never more violent in their opposition to the existing government, whilst it was vested in Great Britain, till indeed they actually rebelled, than they have uniformly been to that which they themselves set up in it's stead. This revolutionary spirit has been, if possible, still more unequivocally displayed, by the countenance and encouragement which, with alarming steadiness, the persons of this description in both countries have uniformly given to the revolvers in France; though it is hardly possible they should feel any other interest in that revolution, than an hope and persuasion that it will be favourable to other revolutions—an hope in which there is, alas! far too much probability that they will not be disappointed.

It is not to be denied, however, that shallow and deceitful as the pretences of such patriots generally are, popularity still does, in no ordinary degree, attach to those of them who, on the pretence of the liberties of the people, disturb the settled order of government—a pretence to which artful men in all ages and countries from the beginning of time have always had recourse, and never without some degree of success: for it is a pretence to which multitudes still listen with pleasure, though conscious that it has very rarely if ever been realised. From this common habit of profess-

ing great zeal for the liberties of the people, even historians are not exempted; if they were, interest alone would lead all those of them, over whom interest has it's usual ascendancy, to consult popularity by affecting it. However extraordinary, then, it may be thought, that a cause which once was remarkably popular, should all at once, and without any adequate reason, have ceased to be so, it certainly can be no matter of surprize that, when it did become such, historians should in general have taken the popular side.

This powerful circumstance of unpopularity is of itself sufficiently inauspicious to true history: but this was by no means the only dark cloud that hung over the prospect of a true history of the American revolt. Long before the contest was abandoned, many persons, who at first earnestly and sincerely reprobated the revolt, came in time to be overawed by the apparent difficulty, if not impossibility, of subduing it: and they brought themselves to think, that if the war were persevered in, even it's final failure of success in America might not be the most disastrous event which might befall them. Towards the close of the war, also, it suddenly became as unpopular with the nation in general, as at first it had been popular. To bring the nation to this temper had long been the invariable aim of Opposition. Their efforts to effect it were incessant and unwearied. For a long time, indeed, their motives being clearly seen through, they were very generally and justly despised. But, encouraged by their perfect acquaintance with our national character, they persevered, and by persevering succeeded. In the long list of virtues for which, as a nation, we are eminent, we have not to boast of any extraordinary firmness and fortitude in bearing up under a long series of untoward and adverse events. The wisdom of any measure is estimated almost solely from it's consequences: an unsuccessful Minister rarely escapes the charge of incapacity; and the single circumstance of a



want of success is not unfrequently urged, even by cool and sensible men, as a sufficient reason for the displacing of a Minister. Many good judges, however, who were not party men, were of opinion that the Ministers who then directed the national councils, in addition to their ill success, were really unequal to the management of the arduous business which was then imposed on them. In such conjunctures men only of commanding talents, who, at any cost, and by any means, can and will enforce success, should be stationed at the helm. Men who are in the habit of being guided in their conduct by the sober deductions of cool reason, are easily overpowered by din and clamour; and, in the midst of confusion, they themselves become confused. This was palpably the case with his Majesty's Ministers during the war with America. They were so stunned and nearly stupefied by the cavils and thwartings of Opposition in Parliament, that no leisure was left to them to think of and attend to other things as they ought: for, even a military campaign was more easily planned and conducted than one in the chapel of St. Stephen. Many of their best concerted plans were cruelly frustrated by unforeseen, untoward circumstances; and their fairest hopes of an happy termination of the contest protracted, day after day, and year after year, beyond all rational calculation: these circumstances, surely, were more than sufficient to perplex, confound, and dismay even men of the most vigorous minds. Under the impression of such causes, I dare not take upon me to blame those steady friends of the Constitution, who, having all along given their firm support to administration, at length, fatally for the empire, acknowledged the conviction of their minds, that the councils of the Cabinet were as feeble as the conduct of some of those Generals whom by a kind of fatality they were so infatuated as to employ. That any conduct could be more feeble was not possible. The mismanagements,

ments, indeed, both of Ministers and Generals, became so great and notorious, that the people were almost excusable for becoming, in their turn, clamorous, and anxious to get rid at any rate of so unpropitious a war. In such an agitated state of mind, it was to little purpose to demonstrate to them, as was done, that, ruinous as the war had been, and appeared likely to continue to be, it could be got rid of only at the expence of much greater evils than could or would have been felt from it's continuance, even if continued under every disadvantage. The advocates for an immediate peace insisted on the evils then actually endured, which were immediate and certain, whilst those which might arise from a premature peace were allowed to be distant and uncertain. On such a topic, no man who is duly aware of the extreme precariousness of all human events, will allow himself to speak with confidence: but the position is as defensible as any which depends only on reasoning and strength of argument can be, that, had the objections of those persons who in 1783 opposed the peace been listened to, many of the dreadful evils which now press so heavily on the world in general, and on Great Britain in particular, might have been avoided. An addition of twenty millions more to the national debt at that period, might have prevented it's being now increased more than an hundred millions. The French revolution, with all those other convulsions to which it may yet give birth, would then have been nipped in the bud.

- ① [The Opposition of that period was by far the strongest, the most united, and persevering, of any that till then had ever been known: and Parliament, where alone public speaking has it's full scope, is the theatre which men who seek to rise by opposition, naturally choose for the display of their talents. Hardly in any other way than in Parliament, and by opposition, can any man hope to obtain reputation in this kingdom either as a public speaker or public man. Parliamentary debate

debate is the study and the business of such public men : and such is the adroitness and ability which some of them obtain in these exercises, that I believe a variety of instances might easily be adduced to shew that, merely by their superiority in the arts of debate, they gain an ascendancy over men who in judgment are their superiors. [The oppositionists in the American war, by dint of long service, became veterans : on their own ground they were indeed, as they were called, a formidable phalanx. No sooner did the popular tide begin to turn and run in their favour, than the zeal and activity of the apostles of popularity were redoubled. The people were goaded on to such a pitch of dissatisfaction and despondency as would have been hardly pardonable had the state of things been in all respects as discouraging as the leaders of the opposition confidently declared it was. So disturbed indeed was the public mind, that many sensible, cool, and well-disposed men justified the precipitancy with which the peace was concluded, by reasons so shallow and frivolous as they would have been ashamed of at any other time.]

Few points in politics are more familiar to a British ear than a change of Ministry : yet, however common, it never can be a matter of slight moment. It really is in itself, and people have been trained very generally to think that it is, something like a revolution in miniature. The same means that are used to overturn a Government, are practised on a smaller scale to turn out a Ministry : these means in general are the involving Government in inextricable difficulties. In various points of view, frequent changes of Ministry do harm to a country ; whilst they appear to do good only in one. The greatest evil arising from them is their enuring the minds of the people to revolutionary ideas : and it is a refinement of judgment hardly to be expected from the mass of mankind, that they should think it a merit to turn out a Minister, but a demerit to resist the Sovereign by whom that Minister



Minister was employed ; whilst the only way in which it can possibly do any good, is by withdrawing the minds of the multitude from persons and objects of still greater consequence ; as mariners, with the view of keeping a whale from the ship, are said to amuse him by throwing out a tub. The persons who are usually most active in the displacing of Ministers, may, it is possible, be satisfied with dispossessing them of their places, and then obtaining them for themselves ; but what assurance can they have for relying that the people by whose instrumentality the dismissal was effected will also be satisfied ? Is there no reason to apprehend, that, having once learned how much it is in their power to reject or retain persons in high stations, they may not always wait to be directed when they shall or shall not exercise it ?

From the character of many of the individuals, of whom during the last war the Opposition consisted, it would indicate as much want of candour to imagine that a majority of them were not satisfied with displacing the Ministry, as want of discernment not to see that all of them were not so satisfied. But I might, for aught I know, calumniate even those dissatisfied men, were I to charge them with having made so inadequate, so insecure, so ignominious a peace as was then made, merely for the sake of the peace. That was but the ostensible pretence : nor was even the removing the Ministry their primary motive ; the ruling motive in all systematic oppositions, it is probable, is success in opposition.

A change of measures, either real or apparent, is one of the natural consequences of a change of men. Hardly had the late leading oppositionists, now converted into Ministers, taken their seats, before a pacification was obtained. Disgraced, defeated, and disheartened as the nation had been by the war, they now eagerly embraced every glimpse of better hopes held out to them by the peace. Of course, the impolicy of the late war, and the policy of the peace, were

were the favourite topics of the new Ministers : and as every peace, however destructive it may ultimately be in it's consequences, brings something like a respite from the pressure of instant danger, there is nothing very extraordinary in the people's having now become as enamoured of peace, as just before they had been of war. Not only the conduct of the war was reprobated, (as it well might be,) but the war itself : not only was Great Britain blamed, but America was pronounced to be without blame ; and this not so much for the sake of exculpating the latter, as for the sake of criminating the former. Not only those members of Parliament, who had always, and uniformly, been in opposition, but many of the former staunch friends of the ex-ministry, now cordially coalescing, concurred in declaring, that the contest with America had been equally censurable in principle and in policy. This was the test of the sincerity of their reconciliation, and the cement of their future union. It was thus, (if I may be pardoned for producing a comparison from the x Scriptures,) that when the Saviour of the world was to be condemned, two inveterate parties among the Jews were reconciled : *and the same day, says the sacred historian, Pilate and Herod were made friends together ; for, before, they were at enmity between themselves.* That an object which men, with their eyes open and perfectly clear, had long seen and declared to be white, should all at once, in the eyes of the same men, "become as black as if besmeared with hell \*," was certainly not in the common course of things. But, a charge of inconsistency was little regarded by the majorities, which now once more soon and easily attained their usual standard in Parliament. Undismayed by the reflection, how very lately, on grounds and principles totally different, they had supported another Minister in larger majorities, and for a longer continuance than had ever before been experienced,

\* Shakespear, Henry VIII.

they now flocked round the standard of his triumphant opponents; and (as far as could be judged by appearances) deliberately supported measures which were diametrically opposite to those they had before abetted. The ex-minister himself was now indeed sunk in *the deep profound* of that mysterious union of parties, which has been emphatically called the Coalition; and with him his party sunk, to rise no more. Ever since that fatal period, it has been the fashion with public men of all parties and descriptions to speak of the American war, just as we do of the gunpowder treason, or any other event which is regarded as a foul blot in the history of our nation—an event which we regret that it is impossible totally to forget. And, as though the patriots of both countries had some particular interests to serve by so extraordinary a course of proceeding, or as though in any quarrel public or private it had ever been known that blame attached to only one of the parties, they refuse to listen to any arguments, or to receive any proofs, which might induce a doubt of their confidence being ill-founded. The monument of London is not more confident in its assertions that the Papists set fire to that proud city, than every man who has any pretensions to patriotism, whether on this or on that side of the Atlantic, is in asserting that to the tyranny only of Great Britain the revolt of America is to be ascribed.

It may perhaps be thought a sufficient apology for some exalted personages who have since held, and some who do still hold, high stations under Government, that, were they not now to condemn the part which this country took in endeavouring to coerce America, they must condemn their own former conduct. Thus facts are to be falsified, and truth suppressed, merely to rescue a few distinguished characters from a charge of inconsistency. This is one of the great evils arising from our present parliamentary system of opposition.



sition. Whilst voting against Ministers continues to be regarded as the test of patriotic principle, and the most direct and certain, if indeed it be not the only road to power, men of talents must necessarily come into office, and even into administration, to a certain extent gagged and bound. Men in private life, and as individuals, sometimes have the magnanimity to acknowledge that they have been in an error: but this is an exertion of fortitude hardly to be expected from men invested with public characters, or from bodies of men. If, under the fair plea, that, having altered their opinions on the thorough conviction of their judgments, they must in conscience alter their conduct, who knows not how little credit would be given to such professions, and with what foul reproaches they must be stigmatised for their supposed apostacy? But, what public station, in any free Government, can any man fill either with credit or comfort to himself, who may be deterred from doing his duty by the apprehension of such reproaches? The distinguished persons here alluded to are not afraid to brave imputations infinitely more serious and awful than those which they thus hope to shun: for, whilst by some miserable sophistries they persist in throwing all the blame of the American insurrection on the nation against which that people rose, they are at war with France for having acted precisely the same part. It is beyond even Mr. Burke's abilities to shew, that, in point of principle, there is a shade of difference between the American revolution and the French rebellion \*.

That

\* From this heavy charge of a fatal inconsistency, this great writer has attempted to defend himself, and those who thought and acted with him, in his Address to the Old Whigs, p. 37. [This defence consists chiefly in his avowal of his disbelief, that the Americans "rebelled merely in order "to enlarge their liberty." If by Americans he means, as no doubt he does, the great body of the people of America, I also profess to disbelieve the charge.] But I do not, like him, rest my disbelief on the disavowal of

Dr.

That men of the most eminent characters, men conspicuous for their rank, station, and abilities, should, in points of such moment, have been so inconsistent as to defend in one instance the same principles and conduct which in another perfectly similar they condemn, and should do so without incurring any reproach by it, is a feature of the times on which no wise and good man can contemplate with satisfaction. But even such eminent inconsistency becomes insignificant, and of little moment, when compared with that of those persons, neither less numerous nor less respectable, who, after supporting the war for many years with inflexible constancy, now, all at once, without any material change of circumstances, changed sides; and with a new Ministry adopted new principles. The triumph which, at the Peace, America

Dr. Franklin, or any persons of his description: even whilst I admit that Dr. Franklin might be, and most probably was, perfectly sincere in the regret he expressed on the prospect of the disunion of the two countries. I doubt not it might be proved that Governor Livingstone also, who, under an assumed title, avowed his predilection for the independence of America, would, in any conversation where it suited his purpose to affect an attachment to Great Britain, have expressed himself with not less ardour, though possibly with less sincerity, than Dr. Franklin did. To have come at the truth, Mr. Burke should have conversed with men of both parties, and above all with disinterested men, much more than he did; and should also have brought their declarations to that only unequivocal standard of sincerity, their actions. Had he done this, he would have found that the bulk of the people of America were as innocent of any premeditated purpose of revolting, as the people of England, properly so called, were of abetting them in their revolt. But whilst this statement lessens their guilt, it probably aggravates their folly. Owing to an unhappy concurrence of various causes, they suffered themselves to be made the dupes of a few desperate democrats in both countries, who thus misled them (as it is the hard fate of the people always to be misled) merely that they might be made their stepping-stones into power.

Mr. Burke's pretence, that the Americans acted on the *defensive*, is a fallacy in argument, which he should have scorned. They, that is to say, their

America gained over the Parent State, was hardly more complete, or greater, than that which Opposition now also gained over the former friends of Government. An enemy in open war not unfrequently shews his lenity, or his prudence, by enlisting and attaching to his own armies such deserters or captives as he finds disposed and qualified : and this was the policy of the Opposition now become possessed of power. That the Minister himself, and the many independent and highly respectable members of Parliament, who, whilst there was any prospect of success, wisely and virtuously supported his administration, and that part of it in particular which affected America, becoming unwise and unvirtuous at the very moment when firmness would have most become them, should suffer themselves to be either bullied or overawed into a fatal dereliction of their principles, is an instance of human infirmity on which, jealous for the reputation of virtue and

their demagogues, declared that they ought not, and therefore they would not, be taxed by the Parent State : and this declaration they resolved to *defend*, and did *defend*, even at the hazard of a rebellion. Just so the demagogues in France declared, that they would no longer be governed by a king, nor have any religion in their land ; and these declarations they are now *defending*, at the hazard of the peace of the world. But do they therefore “act on the defensive?”

Considering the confessed scantiness of all human knowledge even at its utmost extent, we cannot but be surprised that men of established reputation for wisdom should think it any impeachment of their general judgment to own that in one instance they were mistaken. Had Mr. Burke prefaced his *Reflections on the French Revolution* with an acknowledgment of his having been in an error respecting that of America, ages to come, as well as the present, would have blessed his memory. Instead of admiring him, as we now do, only as the first orator and first writer of his age, had his fair fame never been tarnished by his stooping to be the partisan of Oppositions of various characters and views, and the abettor of the American revolt, we should have venerated him as a man equally distinguished for political wisdom and political integrity.



virtuous men, I reflect with sorrow and shame. But that the men of whom I am now speaking should have been so lost to all proper sense of dignity of character, as tamely to submit to be handed down to posterity, either as the weak tools of a weak ministry, or the venal and corrupt tools of a corrupt ministry, and this too when the means of a complete vindication were in their own hands\*, is such an instance of unconcern about honest fame as could have occurred only in this eighteenth century. ✓

This complete vindication, however, was to be hoped for only from a fair, clear, and full exposition of facts, supported by authentic documents. To such documents none but men in office, or those to whom they give permission, can have access. They were long in the possession of a man of adequate talents for any undertaking; and from him the world was long encouraged to look for such a detail of the event as in point of authority must have been unrivalled. The person here alluded to was the Noble Secretary of the American department; whose literary attainments did not discredit the name he bore, though it has long been a favourite one with the Muses†. Whether he was discouraged by foreseeing that such a publication would necessarily be unpopular, and the more so from its being unanswerable—or by the unpopularity of his own character, which, during a large portion of his life, exposed him to the most unrelenting and (I sincerely believe) unmerited persecution which any man of rank has experienced since the days of Aristides—I am not enabled to say: but the Public has infinite reason to regret that he was put aside from his purpose.

That fatal indifference with respect to public opinion, (not to call it by an harsher name,) which so eminently charac-

\* By the publication of official papers.

† Sackville.

terised the best-humoured and best-beloved Minister we have ever known, led the late Earl of Guildford to shut his ears against every similar proposal. And hence, in addition to all the errors and all the misfortunes of his administration, he is gone to his grave under an indelible stigma of having been the great cause of the loss of America. That his own silence on this point, together with an injunction of silence on all over whom he was supposed to have any influence, was an article expressly stipulated for in the conditions of that mysterious coalition, of which the true history is perhaps but little known, I confess, there is no direct evidence to prove. But, at some future period, a diligent collector of recondite history, it is possible, may arise and find materials for *Memoirs of the Secret Transactions of the Administration of Lord North*; and it may then be known why and how America was lost, and what the motives were which induced so wise and good a man as Lord North confessedly was to submit to bear all the blame of it. Posterity may then smile to find, that many of those mighty events, of which we are now so perplexed to find the springs, turned on points as frivolous as (it is scarcely possible they should be more frivolous than) many of those which not long since were laid open to public view by Lord Melcombe's Diary.

After the Grand Rebellion, and even after the Revolution of 1688, different partisans of the parties which then divided and distracted the empire (with the view, no doubt, of vindicating their respective causes and themselves) each published histories of their own. It is no wonder that their accounts are often discordant and contradictory: yet, as the Public was thus enabled to compare the various sentiments and statements of each party, it was at least easier to form some judgment on which side the truth lay. This has not been the case with respect to the American dispute. Whilst it was depending, each party made hardly less use (or to less

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purpose)

purpose) of the pen, than they did of the sword: I myself possess (I believe, not fewer than) forty volumes of miscellaneous pamphlets which were written, *pro* and *con*, before and during the continuance of the contest. But the fates of the two parties in this literary warfare were as different as they were in the field. In both respects, victory very generally rested with the Britons; whilst all the advantages of victory attached to the Americans. Loyalty and loyal men gained nothing but honour, either by their superior prowess, or superior skill. Since the determination of the war, the conduct of the two contending parties has continued to be marked by the same striking difference of character. Those with whom success remained, have omitted no opportunity of relating the history in their own favour; whilst, (as though this had been one of the conditions of the Peace,) instead of contradicting statements which are palpably partial and false, the humbled champions of the defeated party think it to their credit to do all they can to confirm them.

The only histories which, with any propriety, can be said to be in the interest of this country, are those which have been written by British Generals, or by persons in their confidence. The former are entirely exculpatory—compiled on purpose to vindicate their own characters and conduct. This too seems to be the point chiefly aimed at by Captain Anbury and Mr. Stedman: the one is a vindication of General Burgoyne, and the other of the Marquis Cornwallis. All that they have written on the subject, however, relates only to particular periods and parts of the war; and are wholly military. Of course, like the historians in the interest of America, they hardly touch on that great point, in which alone mankind in general are materially interested; I mean, the causes and consequences of the rupture. Add to all this, these histories by our military loyalists, however respectable in other points of view, lose not a little of their weight by being so often

(not



(not indeed on points of great moment) in direct contradiction to each other. Whigs and Tories, as Rebels and Loyalists were uniformly called in America, (these two well-known terms of difficult definition having there, merely through the natural sense of the people, found a practical and proper explication,) hardly differ more in stating their rights and their duties, than General Tarleton and Lieutenant Mackenzie, or (to go still higher) than Sir Henry Clinton and the Marquis Cornwallis, differ in their narratives.

I can account for these imperfections respecting any histories of the American revolt, only by referring them to the unpopularity of the attempt. This has been so great as to have deterred, it is said, the celebrated historiographer of Scotland, from adding to his history of South America, one much more likely to be interesting to Britons, than I mean of the North. And, whilst this so much dreaded unpopularity continues to be directed and managed (as well by the members and friends of administration as by their opponents) with such skill and effect as to amount nearly to a prohibition, I own I do not see how the fate and fortune of American Loyalists (whose reputation, which is now their all, is so materially interested in the truth of history) have been better in this respect than those of the Jesuits, who were crushed with so high an hand, and with such extreme rigour and cruelty, as to have almost disgraced the Christian name. When they were suppressed, the same Bull that pronounced the annihilation of their order, forbade them, or any of their friends, on pain of excommunication, to utter or write a syllable in their defence.

With all the encouragement that the most liberal Government could give, and all the hopes that an intelligent, temperate, candid, and indulgent Public could inspire, the compiling such an history of this event as the occasion calls for must be difficult. The controversy, in its origin, progress,

and termination, was entirely an affair of party : and who knows not how next to impossible it is to develop truth amid those misrepresentations with which party colours every proceeding in which it takes part ? Besides, in a Government formed as ours is, no man possessing either the talents or the integrity requisite in an historian can be wholly neutral in his principles. Every man capable of forming an opinion has some leaning ; and is, in some degree, either a Whig or a Tory. Now the American revolution was clearly a struggle for pre-eminence between Whigs and Tories : and therefore, in speaking of them, the historian will unavoidably give some preference, either to the one or the other, according as he himself is disposed. Were it even possible that he could steer his course so evenly as, seeing much to blame in both, and little to commend in either, to bestow his praise and dispraise with real impartiality, the best returns he could look for would be the being neglected by both.

To a truly learned, intelligent and conscientious man, however, these difficulties, though confessedly great, are not insurmountable. Whenever such an one shall attempt this history, which is sufficiently copious in instructive and interesting matter, I venture to foretell, that though his success may not be complete, yet he will not totally fail. Calling forth all his best powers, and keeping down (as far as frail nature will enable him to keep down) all low prejudices, however deep-rooted and inveterate, he will, with a steady and unbiassed composure, pursue his purpose of examining the pretensions of each party ; and, divesting their jarring and contradictory accounts of each other, as well as their other accounts, of all party-colourings, he will, if possible, ascertain the truth—and, when ascertained, dare to state it, whether it be for or against the party whose cause he espouses.

To assist (as far as so obscure a person, and one of such humble pretences, can hope to assist) future enquirers in this arduous

arduous investigation, this Volume of Sermons is now, with all due deference, submitted to the Public. Merely as Sermons, or even as Political Treatises, in themselves, and unconnected with the circumstances under which they were written, being the productions of a private clergyman, who began to think seriously on such subjects only when he was called upon to write upon them, I am sensible their claim to the public attention is slender. Had they not, however, seemed to myself, and to some kind friends to whom they have been shewn in MS. to contain some information which has not elsewhere been noticed, but which may help to elucidate a difficult but important period of our history, they would never have been drawn from that oblivion to which they had long been consigned.

Neither the many fatal consequences which have resulted to this country by the dismemberment of the empire, and still more from the manner in which that dismemberment was effected; nor even that yet more awful lesson which the world has since been taught by that more fatal exemplification of the effects of false principles, the French Revolution; have so effectually impressed the minds of mankind with a sense of the danger of listening to such doctrines inculcated by such men, as to render this farther warning unnecessary. It must be the world's own fault, if, discouraged by the subject's being now supposed to be forgotten, by the unpopularity of the principles maintained in these Discourses, or by the acknowledged feebleness of their execution, some benefit be not derived from them. For such a season of tranquillity and good humour, when happily there subsists a perfect good understanding between the two countries, I have long wished; from a persuasion that in no other could a publication, which studiously avoids the flattering of either party by wantonly vilifying the other, hope for a calm and candid consideration. The unpopularity of my principles cannot, I should hope, be



fairly objected to by any man who really loves truth ; because it is at least some proof that my intentions are sincere, and that I am in earnest : and though it be true that there is nothing particularly attractive or alluring in the composition of these Discourses, yet, as that may in some degree perhaps arise from their so often adverting to minute and ordinary facts and circumstances not likely to be noticed by other writers, even this defect may be pardoned by those who are less solicitous to be amused than edified, and are desirous thoroughly to understand the subject. When, for instance, the future historian of the American revolt shall recollect (and the first of the following Sermons can hardly fail to bring it to his recollection) how much the Continental Colonies were favoured by the terms of the Peace of 1763, he will also recollect with how much unmerited obloquy those wise men were aspersed, who then foresaw and foretold that it would not be long before the Colonists would be led to think of independency. The reason they gave for this opinion was, that, by the cession of Canada, and the total expulsion of the French from the Continent, the British Colonists, no longer having an enemy on their frontiers, no longer wanted a powerful friend to protect them, and would therefore no longer court that protection by a dutiful and loyal conduct. Adopting, as I did with great eagerness, when that Sermon was written, the common but ill-founded notion, that a people's love and habitual attachments were sufficient pledges of their allegiance, I now  
 X take shame to myself that I was then as loud and vehement as others in declaiming against, what I thought, the injustice of such suspicions.

In like manner, the careful enquirer after truth will see, in the succeeding Discourses, *how* (just before the rupture) the country was rent and distracted by schisms, and by various violent ebullitions of fanaticism : *how* generally, and with what virulent perseverance, Episcopacy was opposed, for no  
 reason

reason whatever besides that of thwarting and irritating those who, being known to be friends to the Church, were concluded to be also friends to the Crown : *how* much it was the fashion, at the period in question, for people of all ranks to speculate, philosophize, and project Utopian schemes of reformation ; which, as it was conducted in America, led, as regularly as ever any cause produces its corresponding effect, first, to the demolition of the Church, as that, in its turn, no less certainly led to the overturning the State : *how* very insufficiently education was provided for ; and that, as though it's scantiness had not been an evil sufficiently lamentable, the little which the people were taught was of a kind to do perhaps more harm than good : *how*, without any apparent new cause, and certainly without any fresh provocation, all the old prejudices against Papists, even more than against Popery, were all at once revived ; and the people of that communion forced to forego their principles, (at least in points relating to government,) that they might preserve their properties from confiscation, and their persons from exile : and finally, *how*, when at length the dispute was matured into a war, it was conducted with such persevering, deep, and dreadful policy, as to shew that those who directed the storm were neither overtaken by it, nor unprepared for it ; and that in short the revolt, however unexpected by, and unwelcome to, the great body of the people, was no more than had been planned and resolved on by their leaders many years before it took place\*.

### Weighing

\* Among many proofs which might be adduced to shew that it was the fixed purpose of a certain party in America to "throw off the yoke," (as they called it,) as soon as ever it should be in their power, the Reader is referred to the following extract from No. 5. in the American Whig. This was a periodical paper, aimed at first chiefly against Episcopacy ; but which also incidentally attacked all the strong holds of Government. It was written altogether by Dissenters ; and, principally, by Mr. Livingston,

Weighing well all these circumstances, and comparing them with occurrences in other ages and countries, as similar, or nearly similar, as any which history furnishes, the future estimator of the great political event now under consideration (and without some accurate knowledge of this no clear judgment can be formed of it's acknowledged and most distinguished offspring, the French revolution) will be better able to appreciate the wisdom, or the want of wisdom, that was shewn both in attempting and effecting it. In the course of such a comparison, a truth of great importance will be strongly impressed on his mind ; which is this : that, in similar circumstances and situations, mankind continue to be what they have always been ; and, with no other changes than

one of the most eminent of them, who has since been one of the Republican Governors of New-York : and it was published about *nine years* before the revolt took place.

“ Courage, then, Americans ! The finger of God points out a mighty  
 “ empire to your sons. We need not be discouraged. The angry cloud  
 “ will soon be dispersed. The day dawns, in which this mighty empire  
 “ is to be laid by the establishment of a regular American Constitution.  
 “ All that has hitherto been done seems to be little beside the collection of  
 “ materials for the construction of the glorious fabric. 'Tis time to put  
 “ them together. The transfer of the European part of the family is so  
 “ vast, and our growth so swift, that, *before seven years roll over our heads,*  
 “ the first stone must be laid. Peace or war, famine or plenty, poverty or  
 “ affluence,—in a word, no circumstance, whether prosperous or adverse,  
 “ can happen to our Parent ; nay, *no conduct of hers, whether wise or im-*  
 “ *prudent—no possible temper of hers, whether kind or cross-grained—will*  
 “ *put a stop to this building.* There is no contending with Omnipotence :  
 “ and *the pre-dispositions are so numerous and well adapted to the rise of*  
 “ America, that our success is indubitable.”

After this explicit avowal by one who was as deep in the councils of the party, as he was active in promoting their measures, are we still to be insulted with the incredulity of our patriots, who wish to persuade us, that such purposes were but “ in the secret thoughts of some of their leaders” \*

\* Mr. Burke's Appeal to the New and the Old Whigs, p. 37.



than merely such as times and places may suggest, continue to act the same part which they have always done. They still are jealous of power, still fond of change, and still easily persuaded to believe that they are not so well governed as they ought to be. These are the standing characteristics of mankind, verified by almost every page of every history. Availing themselves of these propensities, ambitious and factious men have always found it easy, and do still find it easy, to mislead multitudes (wiser, it may be, and better than themselves) to throw away real and substantial happiness, in the hope of obtaining that which, after all, is but imaginary. Viewed in this light, I am not sure that I was right in declaring the revolt of America to have been almost without a parallel in the history of the world. In all its leading features, whether considered in its origin, its conduct, or its end, it was but a counterpart of the grand rebellion in this country in the last century : and, as far as the

and who, with such evidence staring them in the face, persist to alledge, that America was driven and forced to revolt by the oppressive measures of some Ministers of the Crown of Great Britain ?—Ill-fated Ministers ! doomed to serve a country in which when under your auspices things go well no praise accrues to you, whilst nothing can shelter you from the blame of every thing that is adverse. Let America revolt, it is the fault of Ministers : let France, in her phrensy, declare war against us, and carry it on by means more horrid than posterity, if not fraternized by the French, will readily credit, that too is owing to the Cabinet of Great Britain : let the Loyalists in France be encouraged, or our own Jacobins be discouraged, it is all matter of blame to our Ministers : in fine, let Ireland be absurd and rebellious ; or let our sailors, infected with the infatuation of the times, be mutinous, and endanger the life-blood of the nation, Ministers—and Ministers only—deserve all the blame. “ *Quis legem tulit ? Rullus. Quis majorem partem populi suffragiis privavit ? Rullus. Quis comitiis præfuit ? Rullus. Quis tribus, quas voluit, vocavit, nullo custode fortitus ? Rullus. Quis decemviros, quos voluit, renuntiavit ? Idem Rullus,*” &c.—Cicero, *Oratio 2da. pro Lege Agraria.*

philosophy

philosophy of history is concerned, that of Lord Clarendon is perhaps as good as any that could yet be compiled of the American revolution\*.

I have selected for this volume such Discourses as seemed to myself most likely to shew (in a way that can hardly be suspected of misrepresentation) the state of two of the most valuable Colonies, just before, and at the time of the breaking out of the troubles. And I am willing to flatter myself,

\* Classical readers, it is probable, have often been reminded of the striking resemblance there is between the American revolt, and the quarrel which took place between the people of Corcyra and Corinth, as related by Thucydides. Had Dr. Franklin been a reader of that immortal historian, when he was sent on an embassy to solicit the alliance and the aid of France, no injustice would have been done to the pretensions of his country, had he used the very words which the Corcyrean ambassador, on a similar occasion, addressed to the Athenians, "Ἦν δὲ λέγωντι ὡς οὐ δικαίον τῶν σφετέρης ἀποίκους, &c.—Thucyd. Histor. lib. i. § 34. Editio Bipont. vol. i. p. 52.

"If, farther, they tax with a breach of injustice your presuming to interfere with their Colonies, let them learn, that every Colony, whilst used in the proper manner, payeth honour and regard to it's Mother State; but, when treated with injury and violence, is become an alien. They are not sent out to be the slaves, but to be the equals of those who remain behind."—Smith's Translation of Thucydides, vol. i. p. 29.

In these words we find the essence of all the best arguments that ever were or could be advanced on the occasion in behalf of the Americans. The reply of the Corinthian ambassadors is replete with arguments not less apposite to the Mother Country: "Ἀποικοὶ δ' ὄντες, ἀρεστάσι τε διαπαντός, &c.—Thucyd. ut supra, p. 58.

"For, though planted by us, they have even disowned their allegiance to us, and now wage open war against us, pleading that they were not sent abroad to be maltreated and oppressed. We also aver, in our own behalf, that neither did we send them to receive their injurious requitals, but to retain them in lawful dependence, and to be honoured and revered by them.—But though we had actually transgressed, it would have been quite decent on their part to have shewn condescension when we were angry," &c.—Smith's Translation, as above, p. 33.

that every attentive reader will find in them something to illustrate the great event to which they chiefly relate. It is not within their compass, nor do I pretend to give more than an outline of the history : that I may, however, render even this sketch as perfect as it's nature will admit of, I will here, in addition to the causes which I conceive to have led to the revolt, which have already been adverted to either in this Preface or in the Discourses, suggest some others, merely because, though by no means insignificant, they are less likely to engage the attention of other writers.

Unfortunately that spirit of Republicanism, which, assuming the specious name of Reform, overturned the Constitution of Great Britain in 1648, though checked at the Restoration, was not extirpated, but has ever since fascinated the British world under the not less imposing name of Liberty. A large portion of this turbulent spirit was carried over to the Northern Colonies of America by the first Puritan emigrants, who, not having the courage to defend their principles in England where they originated, when Englishmen grew tired of them, transplanted them into a more genial soil ; and thus preserved them from that humiliating reverse of fortune which was experienced by their brethren in the Mother Country on the re-establishment of Monarchy. How they have thriven by transplantation, the revolution of America shews. An able writer \*, who knew the New-Englanders well, gives this testimony of them : “ In all the late American disturbances, and in every attempt against the authority of the British Parliament, the people of Massachusets Bay have taken the lead. Every new move towards independence has been theirs ; and in every fresh mode of resistance against the law, they have first set

\* See “ A Short View of the History of the New-England Colonies,” &c. by Israel Mauduit, in 1776, p. 5.



“the example, and then issued out admonitory letters  
 “to the other Colonies to follow it \*.” The first settlers  
 of all the New-England Governments were, in general,  
 Independent-

\* As the ideas it suggests agree with this representation, and are an  
 ominous attestation of it's truth, it deserves to be noticed and remembered,  
 that the first firing against the King's troops in America was from a meet-  
 ing house in Massachuset's Bay. The eminent forwardness of that peo-  
 ple in rebellious resistance is farther confirmed by the studied denial of a  
 noted writer in the cause of Independency †. “How can they (i. e. the  
 “Tories) in the face of the sun, charge all our troubles on the New Eng-  
 “land Presbyterians ‡; troubles which *originally began* ||, and have all  
 “along been kept up, by a wicked administration and a venal parliament?  
 “To make them the hatchers of mischiefs occasioned by unconstitutional  
 “Acts of Parliament, and the only fomenters of our just opposition, which  
 “a Pennsylvania Quaker, a Maryland or Virginia Churchman, did more to  
 “effect than all the other men on the Continent put together, is cruelty  
 “in the extreme.” If this man had adduced all the resolves of all the  
 committees of all the New-England townships denying this charge, I could  
 not have been more thoroughly convinced of it's being well founded, than  
 I am by this his evasive manner of parrying it with a declamatory reci-  
 mination. To implicate Churchmen in the general blame is an old shift  
 of republican policy. It was thus that Nero set Rome on fire, and then  
 charged it on the Christians: and it was thus, too, that the Puritans of the  
 last century, when themselves had brought the Royal Martyr to the block,  
 impudently laid the blame on their own spawn, the Independents:

“A butcher thus first binds a goat,

“Then sends his boy to cut his throat.”—Granville, Lord Lansdowne.

To this sentiment, Durell, in his “*Historia Rituum Sanctæ Ecclesiæ*  
 “*Anglicanæ*, cap. i. p. 4, also accedes: “*Fateor, si atrocis illius tragediæ*  
 “*tot actus fuerint, quot ludicarum esse solent, postremum fere indepen-*  
 “*dentium fuisse: adeo ut non acutè magis quam verè dixerit L'Estrangius*  
 “*noster, Regem primò à Presbyterianis interentum, Carolum deinde ab*  
 “*Independentibus interfectum.*”

To

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† Payne.

‡ This writer probably does not know the difference; however, the New-  
 Englanders are, in general, not Presbyterians, but Independents.

|| Pleonastic and pretty!

Independents, and a majority of their descendants are still the same; for I conceive there is no material difference between Independents and Congregationalists, as they are sometimes called. This pertinacity in principles, which, according to Rapin, were, “as to religion, contrary to those of all the rest of the world;” and “with regard to the State, they abhorred Monarchy, and approved only a Republican Government †;” is a very striking feature in the character of a people. Their politics, their customs, their religious opinions, (excepting, perhaps, in the article of witchcraft,) their language, and their manners, are all, with very little variation, what those of their forefathers were, when, dissatisfied with every system of religion they could find in Europe, they migrated to America; where, Mosheim says, not without some ambiguity of expression, “they claim the honour of carrying the first rays of divine truth, and of *beginning a work that has since been continued with such pious zeal, and SUCH ABUNDANT FRUIT ‡.*”

To this general charge of disaffection in New-England, I am proud to own there were, and are, many honourable exceptions. Neither is it to be denied that there were many (alas! very many) Churchmen, both in Virginia and in Maryland, who, unmindful of their own principles, became rebels—just as, through the same common frailty of our nature, there are, all over Christendom, professing Christians who are immoral men. Yet, frail and wicked as we all are, blessed be God there has never yet been any system of religion which approved of rebellion as rebellion! Even in New England there were many Dissenters from the Church of England, many who were Independents, of approved loyalty. Worth so distinguished is entitled to peculiar respect; being not less extraordinary than it would be to find, in a field overrun with weeds, here and there a few vigorous stalks of useful plants shooting up and flourishing in spite of the general malignity either of the climate or the soil.

† Rapin's History of England, vol. ii, p. 514, folio edit.

‡ Maclaine's Translation of Mosheim's Ecclesiastical History, vol. iv. p. 239, 8vo edit.

To excite such a people to rebellion, for the purpose of setting up an independent commonwealth, was but to call forth into action the first and strongest principles of which they felt the influence. Accordingly, when the leading men of the Opposition in the British Parliament found it necessary for the success of their schemes (the chief of which I sincerely believe went no farther than that they should succeed, and also displace the Ministry) that Government should be embarrassed, they could not long be at a loss where to look for proper instruments to effect their purpose. Fatally for themselves, as well as for the peace of the empire, the Colonists (by their being able to produce matter apparently new, by their distance and strength, and, above all, by the temper of the times, as well as by their own peculiar character) held forth prospects of an opposition and resistance of such weight, as well might shake any administration to its centre\*.

Of

\* That the Colonists were directly excited to rebellion, either by opposition in general, or by any particular members of it, (though I firmly believe the fact,) I own I am not able to prove, at least by any such evidence as would be requisite in a court of law. Many historical facts of great moment are thought to be sufficiently established, by its being proved, that it is much more probable they should be true, than not true: and there are, I believe, many cases in which even courts of law allow a combination of congruous circumstances to go farther, and with more certainty, to the proof of a fact, than even ocular demonstration. With respect to the matter of fact now under consideration, neither its truth nor falsehood can be proved otherwise than by probabilities. My believing that the Opposition in England stirred up the revolt in America, or, however, very materially contributed to it, I readily admit—adds but little, if any thing, to the proofs of the fact; neither does another person's disbelieving it disprove it. I can only affirm, that I did not take up the opinion on grounds which appeared to me to be slight, nor merely on public report. I well remember, that, at the time, letters purporting to be written by persons of no ordinary name and note in the British Senate, were handed about, and shewn to me, with many others. In these letters the people of America were



Of the thirteen confederated colonies, however, four only were peopled by avowed independents. Admitting, then, that the defection of those four has been satisfactorily accounted for by the encouragement which the discontented oppositionists in England gave to their old principles and prejudices, it still remains to be asked, what were the inducements and the causes which led others not so circumstanced into rebellion? This is a question of great moment, to which I can hope to give a satisfactory answer only by adverting to various detached and unnoticed circumstances which seem to bear on it; and which therefore I will now endeavour to collect and bring forward in some of the ensuing pages of this Preface.

were not only encouraged, but exhorted, (not indeed, in so many words, directly to revolt or rebel, but to do, however, what I apprehend meant and was intended to mean the same thing, that is) to resist Acts of the British Legislature. But neither can I prove, that these letters were not forged: several, I know, or at least I believe, were forged; but several, I have equal reason to believe, were not forged, as they were addressed to persons of some consideration in the Colonies, who corresponded with members of the British Parliament; and had, besides, all the other requisite marks of authenticity. They certainly were not inconsistent with the characters of the men whose names were annexed to them. Any other proofs, the case seems neither to admit of, nor to require. For, after all, what more was there in writing such private letters, (written, most probably, on purpose to be made public,) than there was in the long succession of violent speeches made in Parliament, by many members of Opposition, in defence of the resistance of America? The great Earl of Chatham himself is reported to have said, in his place in Parliament, that he rejoiced that America had resisted: a declaration for which, in any government possessed either of energy or vigour, he would undoubtedly have been impeached.

“It is not to be denied, that there was, in all those Parliaments, several “passages, and *distempered speeches*, of particular persons, not fit for the dignity and honour of those places, and unsuitable to the reverence due to “his Majesty and his councils.”——Lord Clarendon’s History, vol. i. 8vo edit. book i. p. 5.

That a people in full possession and enjoyment of all the peace and all the security which the best government in the world can give \*, should, at the instigation of another people, for whom they entertained an hereditary national dislike, confirmed by their own personal dislike, suddenly and unprovoked, and in contradiction to all the opinions they had heretofore professed to hold on the subject of government, rush into a civil war against a nation they loved, without

\* The description which Lord Clarendon gives of the unparalleled prosperity which this nation enjoyed just before the Grand Rebellion, admirable for its eloquence, and instructive on account of the awful consequences of which he supposes it to have been the forerunner, is not less applicable to America——

..... “England was generally thought secure with the advantages  
“ of its own climate; the Country rich; the Church flourishing with  
“ learned and extraordinary men; Trade increased to that degree that we  
“ were the exchange of Christendom : and for a complement of all these  
“ blessings, they were enjoyed by and under a King of the most harmless  
“ disposition, the most exemplary piety, the greatest sobriety, chastity, and  
“ mercy, that any prince hath been endowed with (God forgive those who  
“ have not been sensible of, and thankful for, those endowments!), and  
“ who might have said that which Pericles was proud of upon his death-  
“ bed, concerning his citizens, that no Englishman had ever worn a mourn-  
“ ing gown upon his occasion. In a word, many wise men thought it a  
“ time wherein these two adjuncts, which Nerva was desirous for uniting,  
“ Imperium & Libertas, were as well reconciled as possible.

“ But all these blessings could but enable, not compel, us to be happy :  
“ we wanted that sense, acknowledgment and value of our own happiness  
“ which all but we had; and took pains to make, when we could not find,  
“ ourselves miserable.”——Hist. of Rebellion, book i. p. 76. vol. i. 8vo  
edit.

Impressed with the same sentiment of the danger arising to a State from great prosperity, the Roman historian, Florus, had before asked, “*Quæ enim  
“ res alia furores civiles perperit quam nimia felicitas?*” Lib. iii. cap. 12.  
sect. 7. And again: “*Causa tantæ calamitatis eadem quæ omnium, nimia  
“ felicitas.*”——Id. lib. iv. cap. 2. sect. 8.

well knowing what cause of complaint they had, and still less what the object was at which their leaders aimed, (for on both these points they frequently shifted their ground,) without an hope, and almost without a wish, of succeeding, is one of those instances of inconsistency in human conduct which are often met with in real life, but which, when set down in a book, seem marvellous, romantic, and incredible. This, however, is an unexaggerated description of the general temper of mind which prevailed in the people of Virginia and Maryland towards those of New-England\*.

The

\* The pains which the leading men in the Northern Colonies took to engage those of Virginia in particular in their long-meditated project of independence, could be unknown to no man on the spot, who was duly careful to watch all those little incidents on which great events so often turn. Hence, when a Congress was resolved on, Mr. Randolph, a Virginian, was pitched on to be it's first President: and hence too, in regular succession, the nomination of Mr. Washington, who also was of Virginia, to the command of the American army. Both Tacitus and Pliny (indisposed as the former of these great writers certainly was to censure popular encroachments with any severity) bestow high praises on Rufus Virginius for having refused the empire when it was offered to him; and for having declared, *he would not take up arms, even against a tyrant, till he had legal authority* so to do; that is to say, till the Senate ordered him. See Plutarch's Life of Galba: and see also the mention of this circumstance in Melmoth's Translation of Pliny's Letters, vol. i. Rufus Virginius, however, was not that Roman, whom the Virginian Cincinnatus, or (as his countrymen are more proud to call him) the American Fabius, may be supposed to have made his model.

Virginia, with a sort of proud pre-eminence, had long been in the habit of calling itself *his Majesty's ancient dominion*. Many of the first settlers in it were persons of respectable families and connections in the Parent State: and their descendants, along with an high spirit of loyalty, still maintained no small portion of the splendid hospitality of the old English gentry. Their character therefore among their Sister Colonies was lofty: and even their central situation gave them great influence. The gaining over Virginia to the confederacy was, on all these accounts, of great moment. I do not know that any thing short of their accession could or



The Colonies in general seem to have been circumstanced as Uzziah is described to have been by the sacred Chronicler†: *He was helped marvellously, till he was strong; but when he was strong, his heart was lifted up to his own destruction.* This has been the course in which human affairs have generally run; and this is not an age to look for any preternatural efforts either of good sense or of virtue. Like an elastic spring kept down and restrained from acting by a superincumbent

would have quieted the fears of the other Southern Colonists respecting the restless spirits of their fellow-subjects of the North. All the Middle and Southern Colonies (at least those lying to the South of Pennsylvania) were afraid lest, when haply by their united efforts they should have succeeded in shaking off the yoke of Great Britain, a Northern Army, as was the case under Cromwell, might give law to the Continent. There is reason to believe, that it was this particular apprehension which, more than any thing else, induced General Washington to accept of the command of the army when it was offered to him. Those persons who remember, or who now have a copy of, a Letter which he wrote at the time, and which was printed, to the Independent Companies of his own neighbourhood in Fairfax county in Virginia, may also remember his alluding in it to this very circumstance, there designated by the terms "*a political motive.*" On all these considerations, as well as on account of my own particular connexion with Virginia and Maryland, and an undissembled warm regard to many excellent persons in both of them, which will last as long as life shall last, I have always contemplated their defection with peculiar sorrow.

..... " Other devils that suggest by treasons,  
 " Do botch and bungle up damnation  
 " With patches, colours, and with forms being fetch'd  
 " From glist'ring semblances of piety :  
 " But he that temper'd you, bade you stand up,  
 " Gave you no instance why you should do treason,  
 " Unless to dub you with the name of traitor.  
 " ..... " I will weep for you :  
 " For, this revolt of yours, methinks, is like  
 " Another fall of man." .....

Shakspeare, Hen. IV. Act ii. Sc. 3.

† 2 Chron. ch. xxvi. ver. 15, 16.

weight, in all Governments, those who are governed are merely prevented from rising against and breaking loose from those who govern : but it is “ the nature of all Colonies to “ aspire after independence, and to set up for themselves, as “ soon as they find that they are able, or think they are able, “ to subsist without being beholden to the Mother Coun- “ try \*.” Those which belonged to this country were planted in imperfection : and this original evil, (if it may be so called,) fostered and cherished by the same hand that first gave it root, “ grew with their growth, and strengthened with their strength.” At their first settlement, the point chiefly attended to was the inducing Colonists to migrate to them. A possibility of their future defection was not foreseen ; nor, of course, guarded against. This was a fundamental error, which should have been corrected whilst correction was possible.

Other infant governments, as they have gained experience, have discovered the faults of their institutions ; and, having the means within themselves, have corrected them. But the American Colonies neither had the means nor the inclination to redress those evils in their Constitutions, which, however slowly they might proceed, were sure at length to undermine and destroy them. Too much weight was, from the beginning, at first necessarily perhaps, or at any rate unavoidably, thrown into the popular scale : and every future colonial regulation rather added to than diminished it's preponderancy. The Parent State (at a distance, and soothed by fair appearances, or overawed by the supposed difficulty of mending what every administration hoped might last at least as long as they could hope to remain in power) either saw not, or heeded not, the latent mischief, till at length it broke out with a force that was irresistible.

Some blame too, perhaps not a little, should be attributed

\* Dean Tucker. Tract iv. p. 161.

to the Parent State, for her **I**rrresolution and unsteadiness in her colonial administration. A very cursory review of the history of the Colonies would be sufficient to prove this charge. It might surprise us all to observe what very different ideas have been entertained by different men on the subject of colonial government; and that one and the same man has sometimes both thought and spoke differently concerning it, accordingly as he was, or was not, fighting under the banners of Administration. The same great Lord Chatham, who rejoiced that the Colonists had resisted British Acts of Parliament, had before declared, that a subject in the Colonies should not be permitted to make even a nail for an horse-shoe without the consent of the British Legislature. In one instance only the Parent State has been uniform: every administration of every reign is marked by some act calculated to improve and aggrandise the Colonies. Authentic lists of some of the disbursements of the State on this score have been published:—they are astonishing; and exceeded only by the effects which they have produced.

That such lists have not been ostentatiously produced, may fairly be inferred from this circumstance, that they have never been complete: there has never yet been published an account of all the pecuniary benefactions, which, during the connexion of the two countries, America received from Great Britain: there have been no accounts published of the large sums which from time to time were bestowed on the schools and colleges of America by individuals and private munificence—nor of the still larger sums annually contributed by a venerable society for the support of religion in various parts of North America. That all mention of such things should have been omitted by those very historians whose pages teem with the bitterest invectives against Great Britain for her supposed oppressions and cruelties, surely does no credit to their liberality. Whilst both Ramsay and Soules are studiously  
solicitous



solicitous to hold up to detestation the harsh treatment which some Americans alledged (though the allegation was supported only by Americans) that American prisoners met with on board the British prison-ships, they make not the least mention of those very considerable sums of money which were voluntarily collected by British individuals (of whom even the humble writer of these pages recollects with some pleasure that he was one) expressly for the relief of American prisoners.

Most writers on American topics, as well as the historians of the revolt, are confident in ascribing the extraordinary prosperity of America to the skill, the industry, and the enterprising spirit of the Americans themselves. It seems to be taken for granted that, notwithstanding our protection and patronage, and notwithstanding all our bounties and benefactions, this actually was the case : and there are few who will be at the trouble to examine on what authority these opinions are founded. No man can be more willing than I am to allow to the efforts of the Americans all that they are entitled to ; and I am equally ready to allow, that it is not a little to which they are entitled : but, at the same time, I am well aware how much more easy it is to assert that they owe their success solely to themselves, than it is to prove it. If, however, ten thousand reasons could be given for the rapid growth of America, the matter of fact must and would still rest just where it now does : for, all this has happened under the auspices, the protection, and the encouragement of Great Britain. All that either country has greatly to regret on this subject is, that the prudence of the one did not keep pace with her affection ; and that the humility of the other was not commensurate with her prosperity. Great Britain did not consider, that, governed as her Colonies were, whilst she strained every nerve to render them opulent and powerful, she was in effect advancing them still nearer to independency.

Nor did those Americans who, by the means of many false and dangerous maxims of government, were at such pains to alienate the affections of too numerous a portion of their countrymen from the Parent State, consider that the principles then so sedulously inculcated for that purpose would render the people equally indisposed towards any future government.

Among other circumstances favourable to the revolt of America, that of the immense debt owing by the Colonists, to the Merchants of Great Britain, deserves to be reckoned as not the least. It was estimated at three millions sterling : and such is the spirit of adventure of British merchants, and of such extent are their capitals and their credit, that, not many years ago, I remember to have heard the amount of their debts to this country calculated at double that sum : it is probably now trebled. Disposed, as with great propriety the Legislature of Great Britain always has been (and it is to be hoped always will be) to be careful of her commercial interests, so considerable a pledge, under such circumstances, becomes of serious moment. Enquiries can hardly be too soon instituted, how far this is, or is not, one of the few instances, in which, with equal advantage to Commerce and to the State, this spirit of enterprize may be controlled and restrained. By so unbounded a credit, that respectable body of men, the British merchants, seem to have deprived themselves, if not of their freedom of will, yet certainly of their free-agency : for if, hereafter, unfortunately for both countries, disputes should again be fomented between the Americans and ourselves, (and their being so deeply in our debt, however able they may be to discharge it, is surely such a state of things as can never be thought likely to prevent disputes,) what is the part which merchants so circumstanced will probably take ? The answer to this question, I conceive, may well be, that merchants will probably act as they once before

before did in a similar case ; that is to say, rather than run the risque of losing their debts, they will side, or appear to side, with the Americans. The condescensions and the concessions which (contrary to the usual course of things) creditors in this instance made to debtors, (and in particular to the planters of Virginia and Maryland,) were not only to the last degree humiliating and degrading, but productive of other and greater evils. [Low people were thus trained to be insolent and unmannerly ;] and were also taught, that there was hardly any thing, however unreasonable, which they could not obtain, provided only they were clamorous and audacious in demanding it. What the humiliations in Japan were, to which the Dutch for the lust of gain are reproached with having submitted, the world, I believe, has never yet been very accurately informed : but I have no conception that either Japanese insolence, or Dutch meanness, could be greater than hundreds of instances, in both ways, which daily occurred between merchants and planters in the Tobacco Colonies, in the business of "*begging tobacco*," as it was emphatically but very properly called. Circumstances such as these call for the attention of the American legislatures almost as loudly as they call on ours. For, their country can never be thought to enjoy a secure peace, whilst a large body of men, of active and versatile minds, ingenious and fertile in finding out resources, and who probably have more interest and more weight in making war or peace in the world, just as either may suit their particular views, than the world seems to be aware of, are so deeply interested in picking a quarrel with this country. I feel a reluctance even to form a conjecture what may be the number of the persons in America, who have no other means of getting rid of the pressure of their British debts, than a rupture with Great Britain : add to this, it never can be good policy in any Government, to cherish in any way, or for any purposes,



purposes, among their people, either bad principles or bad manners. The subject of America, who is permitted, without reproach, and with impunity, to act an unworthy part either towards a British subject or the British Government, wants but an adequate temptation, and a convenient opportunity, to act the same part by those of his own country.

The being overwhelmed with debt seems always to have been an essential ingredient in the character of a conspirator: in all ages, and in all countries, insurrections have been excited chiefly by "*men that are in trouble, and men that are in debt* \*." And, of all the reasons which have been, or might be, assigned for the revolt of America, (and more especially for the revolt of Virginia,) that which I conceive to have contributed the most to it was, that (as was the case with the adherents of Catiline) "*æs alienum per omnis terras ingens erat* †." A people so circumstanced are hardly at liberty to choose their part, even in a revolution brought on without their participation: a case which I own can hardly ever really occur. Their only alternative is (as a blunt cavalier is said to have expressed himself in the time of the grand rebellion) to be loyal and be ruined, or to rebel and be damned. Of course no waters are too much troubled for such anglers to take their chance in: in a revolt they seem to carry on a safe trade, as they may gain, but cannot lose ‡.

\* 1 Samuel, ch. xxii. ver. 2.

† Sall. Bell. Jugurth.

‡ "Alterum genus est eorum qui, quanquam premuntur ære alieno, dominationem tamen expectant; rerum potiri volunt; honores quos quietâ republicâ desperant, perturbatâ, consequi posse arbitrantur."——Cicero, Oratio 2da in Catilinam.

"Sed tamen hi sunt Coloni; hi, dum edificant, tanquam beati; dum prædiis, læticiis, familiis magnis, conviviis, apparatis, delectantur, in tantum æs alienum inciderunt, ut si salvi esse velint, Sylla sit iis ab inferis excitandus."——Ibid.

Many sensible men have thought it a great defect in our Colonial systems, that many of the Governments, or particular Colonies, were formed or laid out more by accident than by plan; and, in general, of far too limited an extent. Had they been intended to be, or had they remained, mere factories, or even a cluster of little independent republics, like the States of Holland, or the Cantons of Switzerland, no great inconveniences might have resulted from the scantiness of their dimensions. But they surely were ill calculated for the foundation of any such government, as, without the peculiar advantages of some of the European republics, might by their own power and dignity ensure obedience and command respect. Every thing in America had a republican aspect; some of the governments rather resembling a large Hanse town, or a City corporation, with their territorial environs, than the venerable State after whose image they should have been formed. Without a civil list, without patronage, and of course without influence, is it to be wondered at that Governors in America too often found themselves little better than so many king logs—liable to be daily insulted even by persons of the lowest orders in the community, as Phædrus expresses it, *omni contumeliâ*; or that they should be deemed (as it is said some one called them at the Council Board in 1691) “Governors of Clouts \*?”

On a superficial view it might be thought, perhaps, that the multiplying of governments would be the multiplying of offices and places; which, being at the disposal of the executive power, might have been supposed sufficient to strengthen the hands of governors. The direct contrary, however, was the case. The few places which Government had to bestow were indeed sufficient to ex-

\* Hutchinson's Hist. of Massachusetts Bay, vol. i. p. 408.

cite dissatisfaction; but hardly in a single instance sufficient to animate men to active exertions, or to reward those who entitled themselves to reward. This would not have been so much to be lamented, had no more power in the same way been left with the people: but, in many of the governments, the patronage of the people was as great as that of the governors was small. Of course, the latter were neglected, and the former courted; and the suitors, like the patrons, being, as might be expected, persons of democratical tempers and talents, it is not to be wondered at that such suits were seldom preferred in vain. A position, therefore, which was once advanced by Governor Bernard, the Governor of Massachusetts's Bay, is the result not only of long and accurate observation, but of sound judgment—and the more it is examined, the truer it will be found—that “the splitting America into many small governments weakened the governing power, and strengthened that of the people; and thereby made revolting more practicable and more probable.” Nothing was so naked, or, in Scripture phrase, so wholly *without form or comeliness*, as government in America: it neither had strength, nor the appearance of strength. Far from discommending those legislators who formed the last American Constitution, for respecting local habits and prejudices, I am ready to own that they probably did as much as could then be done. But, as the evil here complained of was suffered to remain, and still subsists, producing the same untoward effects which it has hitherto always produced, every friend to order, and to a steady firm government, must wish it may soon be in their power to remedy it;—their disposition to do so cannot be questioned.

The loose principles of the times, however, (against which it is the leading aim of this publication to put the world on its guard,) are still to be regarded as the *one great cause* of the American revolt. To such an height had this extreme corruption



corruption of principle been carried, that, had not those bulky adjuncts of this then great empire seen fit to wrestle with the Parent State for pre-eminence when they did, it is too probable some other of it's parts might have made a similar attempt. It was no doubt in America that the principal efforts to excite murmurings and discontents were made; because there they could be made with the best prospects of succeeding: but they certainly were not made only in America. Nor let either Americans nor Britons even yet be too secure, that those restless men of the same description (who still with equal art and ambiguity are on all occasions so forward to boast of their devotion to revolution principles) are even yet fatiated with revolutions.

Subordinate to these more prominent causes of revolt, some others (of inferior moment indeed, yet not wholly insignificant) deserve to be noticed, as being characteristical both of the people and of revolts. When the people of the Middle and Southern Colonies were to be tutored to co-operate with those of the North, whom till then they had viewed only with jealousy and dislike, two methods were taken to lull their suspicions asleep. The being taxed has probably always been a circumstance irksome to mankind; they submit to it only from necessity: but in North America, more perhaps than any where else, the people were studiously taught to regard all taxes as the arbitrary exactions of an oppressive Government. When, therefore, the fatal duty of three-pence a pound was laid upon tea, the people, thus previously prepared and disposed, were easily persuaded to believe also, that, by resisting it with the same firmness as they had shewn in opposing the Stamp Act, it would certainly be repealed: and they were farther instructed to think that the best mode of resisting this new tax would be by forbearing to use the taxed article. The policy of this measure was not at first very obvious: yet, with it's accompaniments  
of

of similar recommendations to "*kill lambs sparingly*," and other injunctions of the same tendency, it's effects on the minds of the people were prodigious. It is well known, that tea (the obnoxious object of the tax) is, comparatively speaking, but little used by the lower classes of the people in America. By thus putting those classes, then, (with hardly a sacrifice on their parts,) on a footing with their betters, to whom tea was necessary, a very artful and acceptable compliment was paid to their levelling humours. Besides this, it helped gradually to train the people of all ranks to pay a deference and obedience to persons invested with no legal nor constitutional authority over them; which, however, they would have paid with great reluctance in any case that had not flattered their own preconceived notions. Those leading men, therefore, to whom it was left to model and conduct the rising revolt, were careful first to learn what orders would or would not be generally acceptable; and they took care to issue none which they were not sure would meet with a gracious reception. Nor were any more acceptable than those by which superiors were put in the power of inferiors. The poor man, who, if not himself a committee man, had it in his power to inform the committee of his district that some richer neighbour had been seen drinking a dish of tea, killing a lamb, or even shaking his head only, and looking dejected on reading a congressional mandate, thus became of consequence, as being enabled to keep his *quondam* superior in awe. Every public order that was issued, either by Congress, Conventions, or Committees, was framed exactly in the spirit of the persons on whom it was to operate; just as field preachers level their harangues, not only to the capacities, but also to the tempers, of their hearers.

A similar policy dictated sundry ordinances which were now issued respecting fasts. Whatever might be the case with the people of the North, those of the Middle and Southern

Southern Provinces were certainly not remarkable for taking much interest in the concerns of religion. But, careless as they were of fasting in it's proper sense and purpose, it was not likely that, in the temper which then prevailed among them, they should be indisposed to *fast for strife and debate*. Some use was thus made of their religious propensities: and this is a sentiment which, however it may occasionally be enfeebled, whenever it operates at all, must operate to some effect. It was of still more consequence to the cause of revolt, that by this device the Southern Clergy, and in particular those of the Church of England, were, almost without an option, compelled to become in some degree subservient to insurgency. We were inextricably entrapped, before we were well aware that a net had been spread for us. The minds of the people became unusually agitated: the times seemed big with some portentous event: and though for some time the Congress made no express mention of a civil war, yet the people were often warned to *prepare* for the worst. This preparation was soon interpreted to mean that they were to accustom themselves to arms. I have sometimes thought, that there surely must be something particularly alluring, either in the idleness of military exercisings, in the dress and parade of it, or in that air of importance which a military character seems to give to those who are invested with it. Were this not the case, such multitudes would hardly be found ready and eager to muster whensoever or by whomsoever they are called upon. But, whether they were military arrays, or solemn fasts, which the Congress now enjoined, both were implicitly obeyed; and the injunctions were popular. It is true, indeed, that at first their fasts were not appointed, as was afterwards the case, for the express purpose of "praying for patriotism and it's success." They were appointed, that the people might pray to God to avert the impending calamities.

And



And what good man, or what faithful minister of God, could refuse to supplicate Heaven for the restoration of peace to a distracted land? No just objection could lie against the thing itself: all that was objectionable was the incompetency of those who enjoined it. Some Clergymen indeed soon saw through the flimsy veil; but, thinking it neither wise nor safe to set themselves directly against the current of the times, as no particular services were prescribed, they judged it to be best upon the whole to attend their churches. They did this the more chearfully from a consciousness that it was at least in their power to avoid gratifying such of their hearers as were seditiously disposed with any inflammatory harangues. For this conduct they were often insulted and persecuted by many of those loose and disorderly persons who had heretofore been the least respected in society, but who now became noisy, forward, and assuming. Too many of the Clergy of the Church of England, however, (and no others are implicated in this charge,) either not seeing, or not sufficiently regarding the consequences of any public deviation from the straight line of rectitude, fell into the snare: and when the pastor strayed, it was no wonder that the flock followed.

Some farther enquiry into the causes of this striking difference of conduct in men of the same order, and under the same inducements and obligations to act aright, seems necessary, from it's having been productive of some not unimportant consequences. The fact stood thus: in all the Colonies to the North of Pennsylvania, the Clergy of the Church of England were (I believe without a single exception) uniformly loyal: and many of them were called upon to give such proofs of fortitude in *suffering for righteousness sake*, as would not have discredited primitive martyrs \*. In the other

Govern-

\* There are in the possession of the Society for propagating the Gospel in Foreign Parts many letters from their missionaries, (now become documents

Governments, though (blessed be God!) we did not all bow the knee to Baal, yet is it not to be denied that far too many of our order were not steadfast. The publication of two patriotic sermons in Philadelphia, by two clergymen of rank and weight in our Church, told the world but too plainly, that all our Clergy did not think unfavourably either of the insurgents or of their cause.

To account for this inconsistency, it is to be observed, that the Northern Clergy were in general missionaries, and received salaries from the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts. Their brethren in the South were established; but so established as in no small degree to be still dependent on the People, and on them alone. In Virginia, they were elected to their benefices by the People: and though, by an examination of the Virginia acts of establishment, as those acts appear upon paper, the Clergy, after their election, might have been thought to have been placed beyond the reach of popular control, yet every man who had a practical acquaintance with that country before the revolution must know that this was not the case. In Maryland, where the Clergy obtained their preferment from the Governor, and where the establishment was upon the whole by far the most respectable of any upon the Continent, an Act, which was passed just at the beginning of the troubles, had

ments of authentic history,) which would in a very striking manner confirm this assertion.

To these truly good and great men, that fine encomium of Milton's, on Abdiel, might almost literally be applied:

“ Among the faithless, faithful chiefly they—

“ Among innumerable false, unmov'd,

“ Unshaken, uneduc'd, unterrified,

“ Their *loyalty* they kept, their love, their zeal:

“ Nor number, nor example, with them wrought

“ To swerve from truth, or change their constant mind.”

Paradise Lost, book v. l. 897.

rendered the Clergy, if possible, more dependent on the People than their brethren of Virginia. In both these Colonies it had long been the drift of every legislative interference, of which the Clergy were the objects, to withdraw them from any dependence on, or connection with, Government; and to attach them to the People. Hence, the Church of England, though established, and, as far as I know, found in her doctrines, was, at the period of the revolt, in discipline and church-government, palpably of a more popular form than the Presbyterian Church under the establishment in Scotland. That many of the Clergymen who conformed (in which number are all those who are now bishops in America) acted conscientiously in the part they took, it would be great want of charity not to believe: and though, even in human judicatures, erroneous principles or opinions are not allowed to be pleaded in bar of judgment, it would be uncandid not to reflect, that those Clergymen were exposed, like the rest of mankind, to the influence of those opinions of the times, which, like a torrent, swept away all cool and sober thought, and all sedateness of judgment, in men of all ranks and orders, in one mad phrensy of ambition.

After all, where is the man, who, having read the history of mankind with all proper care, will take upon him to affirm, that nations, as well as individuals, are not liable to paroxysms of insanity or phrensy; and that the revolt of America may not as fairly be ascribed to a strong spirit of delusion on the subject of politics, as the rebellion of 1641 was to a similar spirit on the subject of religion? Instances of religious infatuation in communities are too notorious not to be acknowledged; but it seems arbitrary to limit enthusiasm to one sentiment of the human mind. John of Leyden, or any other fanatical reformer, was reputed a madman only from his attempting what he conceived to be a good end by improbable and desperate means; and what more could be said of the celebrated



celebrated knight of La Mancha; or what less of Wat Tyler, Tom Paine, or any other fanatical reformer of States? I conceive it to be a point yet undecided, whether Mahomet himself did not owe his unequalled success in the East at least as much to his fanaticism as to his imposture. And far less injustice would have been done to his character, than, in my humble opinion, was done to Alexander, and to Charles the Twelfth of Sweden, when a great poet of our own called them "madmen," had his biographers described him as having learned, in the words of Horace, "*insanire—certâ ratione, modoque.*" But if these immortal heroes are to be set down as *madmen*, what shall we say of those millions of men who either composed or paid their armies\*?

What else is madness but misguided passions and blinded

\* Were it not that mankind, in forming themselves into sects, parties, and factions, very generally renounce the exercise of their reason, why should their leaders so often have found it necessary to distinguish men so associated, not by any circumstances characteristic of good sense and sober judgment, but by some low and ridiculous names, some silly peculiarity of dress, or other senseless badge of distinction? Hence (not to go out of our own country) such strange names as Puritans, Roundheads, Whigs, Tories, White Boys, Dippers, Ranters, Quakers, &c. &c.: hence those prodigious effects, far beyond what it would have been possible to produce by the soundest and clearest arguments, which are said to have resulted from such popular tunes as *Lillibullero*, *Ca-ira*, &c. &c.; and hence trees of liberty, cockades of pieces of buckskin, and suits of blue and buff. If Quakerism, notwithstanding the inoffensiveness of its tenets, be now on the decline, (as many think that it is,) I can attribute it to no cause so probable as this, that some of the most distinguished of its members, ashamed of being any longer so strongly marked by some extremely unmeaning, if not absurd, peculiarities, have, like the rest of their countrymen, lately ceased to make it a part of their religion not to cock their hats, or put buttons on them; and have ventured to say *you*, though speaking only to one person. Had it not been for the ostentatious display of such childish singularities, so flattering to low pride, it may well be questioned whether even opposition and persecution could have driven so many to attach themselves to a system so unalluring.

reason? All the great commotions which have so often agitated these kingdoms, when analysed, appear to have originated, first, in the ill-governed passions of some popular leader or leaders; and, next, in the misled reason of the people. For a long succession of reigns, a mere predilection for a particular family, (as in the contests between the Houses of York and Lancaster,) armed one part of the kingdom against the other; some hot-headed chieftains led them on, and the deluded multitudes followed. In such contests, *the still small voice* of Reason was listened to, just as it would be listened to by a troop of devotees celebrating the orgies of Bacchus. Not much longer ago than a century, the kingdom was again goaded on almost to madness by fierce controversies about unessential points of Religion: and now we are once more deluded and distracted by a phantom, mis-called Philosophy; for, our demagogues call themselves philosophers, with just the same propriety that a poor lunatic, with his crown of straw, fancies and calls himself an emperor. Our posterity, it is probable, will see this modern phrensy in all its foulness of deformity; and moralize on it, as we now moralize on the heroes of the crusades, or on the cant and hypocrisy of Cromwell and his adherents. The hermit Peter, who is said first to have sent so large a portion of the flower of Europe on a Quixote errand to the Holy Land, was a sober, rational, and virtuous man, when compared with such incendiaries as Paine and his abettors. And however decided our preference may be of the idol of our own setting up, as it is manifested by our arbitrarily ordering all men to fall down and worship it, there certainly is room to suspect that, with all its faults and all its errors, there was less folly and less injustice in the beginning of the grand rebellion, than there was in the revolt of America. I would fain add, what also I strongly incline to believe was the case, that, with all their wrong-headedness, the leading men under Cromwell, considered

considered either as statesmen, as warriors, or as writers, were in no respect inferior to the metaphysical statesmen and rebellious reformers of the present times.

It is with still more confidence that I attribute the success of the Americans in their revolt to the great improbability there was of their succeeding. It may well make the great men of these kingdoms blush to recollect who and what those self-tutored statesmen and heroes were by whom their counsels were baffled, and their armies defeated and disgraced. To the supposed insignificance of the Colonists there can be no doubt some of their success is to be attributed; as, instead of caution, it begat contempt in their opponents; and no adversary is so mean as that he may safely be despised. Independently of this, it is in itself more difficult to have to contend with men of irregular and desultory minds, than with persons of distinct, clear, and steady understandings. Against feasible projects proper precautions may be taken; but who knows how to make head against the wild and disorderly, but vehement and impetuous, proceedings of mobs, or of the chieftains of mobs? All countries have produced Massaniellos, Joans of Arc, and Jack Cades; to whom I may perhaps add the redoubtable Robespierre, and certainly the late mutineer Parker; men who have become formidable chiefly by attempting improbable things by improbable means—and this, perhaps, is as satisfactory an account as could easily be given of the success of Mahomet. A certain degree of wildness and eccentricity pervaded his character; neither his thoughts nor his actions appear to have been regulated by any plan; his successes were probably as unexpected, even by himself, as the means by which they were effected were in general unpremeditated; and it was impossible for those, who wished to oppose him, to counteract projects which it was impossible for them to foresee, and which were no sooner conceived than executed. And, were I now called on



to assign one, and only one, great paramount reason, accounting for the success with which the arms of the present French republicans have lately been crowned, and in particular for their victories in Italy, I certainly should pass by the enthusiasm of liberty, as supposed to operate on their soldiers, as the groundless conjecture only of enthusiasts; and also pass by even the immense numbers of their armies, because, when ill-disciplined, that circumstance is as often disadvantageous as advantageous; and ascribe all that has occurred, to the novelty, the irregularity, and the improbability of their attempts. It is of the essence of such causes, however, to be efficacious only for a season; it must be an unpardonable fault, both in future Generals and future Statesmen, if, hereafter, either victories or revolutions be effected in the same way.

And now having, with all the fidelity of which I am capable, enumerated (either in this Preface or in the body of my Work) such of the causes as seemed to me to have been the most efficacious in producing the revolt of America, it is incumbent on me, next, to point out some of the many interesting consequences which it either has already occasioned, or may be expected hereafter to occasion.

I reflect (certainly not without being mortified, yet without seeing any reason to blush either for my sagacity or my sincerity) how totally a prediction respecting the attachment of the Colonists to their Mother Country, which I ventured to suggest in the first of the following Sermons, has failed. When that Sermon was first written, most Americans thought, at least on that point, as I thought; it would then have been deemed weakness or prejudice to have thought otherwise. To the best of my recollection, one of the public addresses from Virginia, on the subject of the Peace, made the same protestations, with the same earnestness, and no doubt with equal sincerity: indeed, I believe, it was the  
general

general language of American addresses at that period. Even at this moment (when, according to the appearances so ostentatiously displayed by one description of people, the political horizon of the United States of America is perfectly calm and serene) it is demonstrably more probable that convulsions should arise, terminating in a revolution, and in the destruction of their present system of government, than in 1763 it was that they should shake off their dependence on Great Britain. It is more probable, not only because their present Government is in itself really weaker than even that under which they were happy in 1763, but also because the people in general are less attached to it both from principle and habit. The Americans do not yet seem to be properly conscious how much they lost when they divested themselves, or endeavoured to divest themselves, of those habitudes, customs, and prejudices, to which the old Governments of Europe, in case of party contests, resort and cling with infinite advantage. Merely as Americans, they have no valorous ancestry to boast of, nor any history but of yesterday. Be these mere prejudices; man, either individually, or in his social capacity, is a creature of habits and prejudices: and the Legislators who shall attempt to remove them will find, as the reward of all their pains, that they have but removed the boundary of a delightful near prospect, in order to let in a shocking extensive one\*. These new republicans, however, in their haste to get rid of old prejudices, have also been so unwise, or at least so unfortunate, as, in lieu of old ones, to adopt many new ones less prudent and more dangerous. There is now in the United States a much larger party, than there was in 1763, of persons who have been educated, and, as it were, trained to revolt: and, as though their own produce of discontented and restless men were not sufficient, they have imported, and are still importing, from the different States of

\* See Maxims, Characters, and Reflections, p. 79 and 107.

Europe, patriots who are the reformers of governments by trade, and follow it as a profession\*. It is fair to infer, that, from such a combined union of resources, America is now abundantly stocked with men, whose modes of thinking and principles are of a nature likely to lead them to be dissatisfied with any government which may be established. Such a party will be always on the watch, and always ready to seize on any opportunity that may offer, to overturn a settled government: the reputableness, or disreputableness, of such attempts now depend entirely, not on the nature of them abstractedly considered, but on their success, or want of success.

Founded as the present government of North America was under the auspices of the People, it must have been a solecism in politics had it not been weak. Strength and weakness, as the terms are here applied to these States, relate solely to their own intrinsic powers and resources as they operate on themselves, and without any reference to their ability or disability to cope with other States and Governments. Now, as it was necessary (not indeed for the sake of the new government which was to be founded, but for the sake of pulling down the old one) that the whole of the revolution should assume and be of a popular cast, it was not to be expected

\* "I wish we could say that a change of air had produced a change of conduct in some of them. The comrades of Muir and Palmer were no sooner landed at New-York last year, than they began to pick an hole in the coat of the American Government. They openly declared that it was *tarnished by the last and worst disgrace of a free Government*; and said, that they looked forward to a *more perfect state of society*. (See their Address to the Unitarian Doctor.) I do not say that they had any immediate hand in the Western affair: but when rebels from all quarters of the world are received with open arms as persecuted patriots, it is no wonder that rebellion should be looked upon as patriotism." — A Bone to gnaw for the Democrats. Philadelphia, 1795, 2d edition, note, p. 11,



that the People (now made their own rulers) should be disposed to lay any very rigorous restraints on themselves. Accordingly it has been observed that in the same proportion that any Government is popular it is also weak; and hence (from having either seen, or experienced, the unavoidable weakness of such forms) the bulk of mankind in all ages and nations have thought, and do still think, it for their interest to submit to and live under systems more despotic; not, it may be supposed, without a proper sense of the many strong objections which have often been urged against such forms, but influenced solely by the prospect which they hold out of greater security and durability.

This consideration of the comparative strength and weakness of popular and despotic forms of Government furnishes, if I mistake not, an almost irresistible argument against the conjectures of those speculative writers who have taken so much pains to make the world believe that all Government was originally founded in the consent of the People. Had this been the case, all Governments, at least in their origin, must have retained some of the strong characteristics of their first fabrication; they must have been at once free and weak. Whereas most of the old Governments, of which history has preserved any records, were, at the period when they might be supposed to have come fresh from the hands of their first framers, if not free, yet strong; and, in general, monarchichal\*.

For the truth of these assertions we need not look beyond the United States of America. Ever since they have become a distinct people, their Government has been unsettled, agitated, and sometimes even on the brink of revolution †. It

is

\* “Principio rerum, gentium nationumque imperium penes reges erat: quos ad fastigium hujus majestatis non ambitio popularis, sed spectata inter bonos moderatio provehebat.”——Justin. lib. i. cap. i.

† It is thus that Mr. President Adams himself describes some of the immediate

is but a few years since this danger was great and imminent. A very large body of people actually took up arms against the existing government: and the reasons they assigned for their insurrection were neither less just, nor less cogent, than those which they themselves, in concurrence with the persons against whom they now rose, had just before alledged to justify their general resistance to the Parent State. They complained (not indeed of a duty upon stamped paper, or a small tax upon tea, but) of unconstitutional, grievous, and oppressive taxes in general. Nor, for a while, were their prospects of success less flattering than, at the beginning, those of their prototypes, the malecontents in 1775, were. Like their predecessors, also, they found friends in those parties,

mediate effects of their first Constitution, which, he says, it was foreseen "could not be durable." "Negligence of regulations, inattention to recommendations, disobedience to authority not only in individuals but in States, soon appeared with their melancholy consequences—universal languor, jealousies and rivalries of States, decline of navigation and commerce, discouragement of necessary manufactures, universal fall in the value of lands and their produce, contempt of public and private faith, loss of consideration and credit with foreign nations, and at length discontent and animosities, combinations, *partial conventions and insurrections—threatening some great national calamity.*"——See his Inaugural Speech on his entering on the office of President: at Philadelphia, March the 6th, 1797.

Of the virulence and audacity of parties in America, and as a specimen also of the weakness even of their new and present Constitution, take the following description from the able writer already quoted, who (much to the credit and the happiness of America) is become one of the most popular public men among them. "The truth is, those among us who have made the most noise, and have expressed the most rancour against Great Britain, seem to have done it only to cover their enmity to the federal government, and consequently to their country, if we may with propriety call it *their* country. Let any man take a review of their conduct since the beginning of the present European war, and see if this observation is not uniformly true. It was they who raised such a clamour

parties, which it is of the essence of the American Government, like our own, to engender—under the imposing name of an Opposition. It was a circumstance, however, as unpropitious to the cause of the Insurgents, as it was fortunate for the Established Government, that no pretence was found for the Oppositionists in the British Parliament to take part with them; nor any powerful Nation disposed or at leisure to abet the cause of these refractory subjects. Even the neighbouring countries, which are still connected with Great Britain, were either too weak or too generous to intermeddle with their quarrel. Hence the Established Government, availing themselves of a striking instance of wise and resolute conduct in the history of Rome \*, and profiting by the recent example

“mour against the President’s wise proclamation of neutrality; it was  
 “they who encouraged an insolent and intriguing foreigner to set the laws  
 “of the Union at defiance, and to treat the supreme executive authority  
 “as if he had been a Talien, or a Barrere, or the President of nothing but  
 “a Democratic or Jacobin Club; it was they who brought the vexations  
 “and depredations on the commerce, and then guillotined in effigy the  
 “ambassador extraordinary, the angel of peace, who went to repair their  
 “fault; finally, it was they who *fanned the embers of rebellion in the West*  
 “*into a flame*, and caused fourteen or fifteen thousand men to be taken  
 “from their homes, to undergo a most fatiguing campaign, at the expence  
 “of a million and a half of dollars to the United States.”——A Bone to  
 gnaw for the Democrats, p. 27.

\* When, of the thirty Colonies which Rome possessed, twelve had revolted, (and, as appears, merely from an unwillingness to contribute their share to the general exigencies of the State,) the Romans did not, like Great Britain, hope to recover them by coaxing and caressing them with an increased fondness; but instantly had recourse to the more manly, and (I add) the more merciful, means of coercion and force.

“*Novâ re consules isti, quum abstertere eos à tam detestabili crimine*  
 “*vellent, castigando increpandoque, plus quàm leniter agendo, profecturos*  
 “*rati . . . . aiebant . . . . non detractionem eam munerum militiæ,*  
 “*sed apertam defectionem à populo Romano esse. Redirent itaque (legati*  
 “*scilicet) properè in colonias, & tanquam integrâ re locuti, magis quam*  
 “*aui*



example of a contrary conduct in this country, mustering up all at once as much strength as it could command, exerted it with instantaneous vigour, and therefore with effect: the insurgents were defeated, dispersed, and disgraced.

A respite indeed from the contest with the Parent State was hardly obtained, before very alarming altercations arose among the Americans themselves: they were so sharp and fierce as to excite serious apprehensions in those who were entrusted with the executive power. Their leading men then discovered (and certainly no great sagacity was necessary to enable them to discover) that the Constitution, for which they had been contending at the risque of every thing that was dear to them, when obtained, was a weak one, and in every respect inadequate to their exigencies. The first very important business, therefore, which engaged the attention of their Legislators after the Peace, was the framing a new Constitution. Every man who knows any thing of the secret but true history of his own times, must know with what difficulty the stronger and better Constitution, which still exists, and apparently exists unimpaired, was at first obtained. But, Constitutions of Government, unlike those of the persons who form them, grow stronger by growing older: and, partial as this age may seem to be to new Constitutions, as well as practised in the art of making them, I own I can hardly imagine a case in which it is possible to make a *new* Constitution that shall possess sufficient strength and stability.

“ausi tantum nefas cum suis consulerent; admonerent, non Campanos  
 “neque Tarentinos eos esse, sed Romanos: inde oriundos; inde in colonias  
 “atque in agrum bello captum, stirpis augendæ causâ, missos; *quæ liberi*  
 “*parentibus deberent, ea illos Romanis debere*, si ulla memoria antiquæ  
 “patriæ, si ulla pietas, esset.” . . . . . “Consules hortari & consolari  
 “senatum, & dicere, alias colonias in fide atque pristino officio fore; eas  
 “quoque quæ ab officio discesserint, si legati circa eas colonias mittantur,  
 “qui *castigent*, non qui *præcentur*, verecundiam imperii habituras esse.”

—Liv. lib. xxvii. sect. 10.

How sufficient that security is, which the people of America have acquired under their last formed Constitution, with all it's accessions of compactness and energy, may be judged of by those commotions which have just been noticed; and which, though the first, it is very little likely should be the last. They were pacified and surmounted, more through an happy concurrence of circumstances, than through any real strength of the Government. Among these fortunate circumstances I reckon, as the chief, the personal influence of their late President; and the wise and liberal policy of this country in co-operating with the Loyalists of America, who now, happily, are the prevailing party: by these means the machinations of those French Jacobins, who entertained such confident hopes of being able to fraternize with their brother Republicans of the United States, have been completely baffled and defeated.

That the causes here assigned for the present stability of these States are not imaginary, might be proved (if proof be wanting) by many of their late public proceedings; but especially by the resignation of their late President, and his "Address to the People of the United States." His retirement from public life is an event of great political importance. In every point of view, his death, under whatever circumstances, and at whatever time it might take place, could not but be productive of important consequences to his country. To take off as much of the danger of such an event as in the present state of things was practicable, he seems to have resolved that his civil demise should precede his natural death; and, by doing so, he reserved to himself, in some degree, the power of regulating the most important of it's consequences. A measure of such wise and virtuous policy must have crowned the evening of his life with honour, even had all it's preceding periods been passed in obscurity.

The particular juncture in which he saw fit to make this experiment was highly favourable to his views \*. The leading Powers of Europe were all deeply involved and engaged in great troubles of their own; and France in particular no longer at leisure to pursue her dreadful project of fraternizing with the rest of the world. These circumstances left the Americans perfectly at liberty to attend to their own interests in their own way. They enjoyed also such advantages of trade, that (unless great prosperity must of necessity still be the fatal fore-runner of a fall) it was not easy to foresee, how, from what quarter, or on what ground, any ruinous internal evils could soon arise among them. Every good man, who is capable of deriving happiness from contemplating the enjoyments of others, cannot but wish that a purpose projected with so much wisdom and benevolence may really produce all the good effects which it was intended to produce.

No stronger proof, however, than this transaction affords, needs be adduced to shew, that, in the estimation of the late President and his friends, the present Government of America is not a strong Government. Buttresses are not applied to firm and substantial buildings: nor does the man who has the use of all his limbs call for a crutch. If it were possible that a doubt could still be entertained on this point, that best commentary on the transaction Mr. Washington's valedictory declaration must remove it. I consider that excellent public document, and Mr. Burke's masterly writings on the subject of the French revolution, as events not the least significant of any which this eventful age has produced. The

\* That his views in his resignation, and those of his friends, were contemporaneous to the ideas here suggested concerning them, may be inferred from the following sentence in Mr. President Adams's inaugural speech: "May his name still be a rampart, and the knowledge that he lives a bulwark against all open or secret enemies of his country's peace!"



great share which both these great men took in bringing about the revolution of America needs not to be here repeated. What the motives were which induced them thus strenuously to exert themselves to effect a purpose which, for any thing they knew, might or might not be productive of advantage to their respective countries, or of happiness to mankind, I leave, as becomes me, to the great Searcher of hearts. But that either the one or the other of them has since thought of the measure as in common candour we must believe that they then both thought, not even their own solemn asseverations (which, however, there never was any probability that they should ever have made) should have persuaded me to believe. I read the direct contrary (in a manner far less open to any suspicions of insincerity) in every page of the publications which have just been mentioned. I appeal to every man who has read them, (and such I suppose to be every man who can read,) and who reads with any attention to the spirit as well as to the letter of what he reads, whether, if Mr. Burke's "Reflections on the Revolution in France" (*mutatis mutandis*) had been published during the American contest, and men's minds had then been as much alarmed as has since been the case at the awful prospect of one revolution treading close on the heels of another, it would not have excited the same general abhorrence of the revolution of America as it happily did of that of France. Sophistry itself may be challenged to shew a shade of difference in the two events, as far as principle is concerned. If America had a right to revolt, so had France; and so have the subjects of any Government in the world.

I equally appeal to every impartial man, whether, at the close of the war in 1763, George the Third might not have addressed his then loyal and loving subjects in America in the spirit, if not in the very words, of George Washington's farewell letter to them. With whatever satisfaction his  
country-

countrymen received this affecting appeal to them, (and they must be callous to all the finer feelings of the heart, as well as lost to all proper sense both of their duty and their interest, if they have not received it with the greatest,) neither their respect and veneration for him can be greater now, nor their expressions of those sentiments more ardent, than thousands may remember they formerly were for their King. And good and great as their late President confessedly is, it would be an affront to him only to imagine that he is more so than the great and good King whom it was once his honour to serve; and who still merits the love even of Americans, as much as he possesses that of a people (whom no well-informed or well-disposed American can regard as aliens) who reflect with heart-felt satisfaction, that (whilst both the Americans and the French could find no better means of shewing their childish enmity to monarchy, than by vilifying and rebelling against two of the best kings who ever sat on their thrones, or on any other, and pique themselves on being the subjects, not of kings, but of men certainly not better than themselves) they still are the happy subjects of George the Third.

Of the first-born, in direct lineal succession, of a numerous progeny of revolutions, of which that of America promises to be the prolific parent, I mean the Revolution of France, I feel I hardly have an heart to speak, being overawed by the enormity of it's guilt, and the immensity of the danger with which it threatens the world.

That much blame attaches to Great Britain, from her supineness in suffering Colonial mismanagements to rise to such an height of error as at length to amount to a rebellion, from her want of counsel and conduct in carrying on the war, and from her pusillanimity in concluding an ignominious peace, the most zealous of her admirers will not deny. For all these errors she is now called to account, and made

to pay severely for all her misdoings. Heavy to this nation was the loss of Thirteen of the best of her Continental Colonies: but it becomes intolerable to us now only when, as one of it's consequences, another republic is about to arise at our very doors; a republic to which that of America can be compared only as an infant Hercules may be compared with an Hercules at his full growth. As soon may the poor weather-beaten native of the tempestuous coasts of Magellan hope for the mild serenity of weather found only in temperate zones, as we, or any of the nations in their vicinity, be permitted to enjoy any peace whilst France is a republic. Through a policy as dishonourable as it was shallow, many of the Powers of Europe, though they did not in the late war actually join in the unnatural confederacy which was formed against us, yet bore to look on with great composure, whilst, merely to humble our pride, our revolting subjects were permitted to form themselves into a republic. For this, those nations also are now about to be punished. A nation of men, like the children of Cadmus, have all at once sprung up in the midst of them, all armed, and all destined, as it would seem, hereafter to subsist by pillage and rapine. If in any respect they are more civilized than the Piratical States on the coast of Africa, that renders them only the more dangerous; as no savageness is so completely inhuman as refined ferocity. Like the ancient legalized banditti of the Highlands of Scotland, they will probably support their monstrous armies by levying a tribute \* on all the rest of the world †. But vengeance shall also overtake France herself,

\* This, in Scotland, was called Black Mail.

† “ Que deviendront alors les autres Etats en présence de cette oligarchie desorganisée, fortifiée d'accroissemens prodigieux, entourée de Rois vaincus ou soumis, d'Etats ébranlés ou abattus, de tributaires terrifiés, ou d'ennemis impuissans ?

“ Que deviendront les Français eux-mêmes, confédérés, en apparence,



herself, if indeed it has not already overtaken her : sunk as she is, from one of the first monarchies of the world, either in ancient or modern times, to a mean and odious republic ; from having long given law to Europe in all those arts which are supposed to refine men and embellish life, to become the scourge, the abhorrence, and the dread of the world. Nor, in this general wreck of happiness, brought on mankind by these convulsions, must America hope to escape unhurt. For, a revolt, like the eruption of a volcano, cannot but give something of a shock to every contiguous State. Admitting, with some politicians, that revolutions are sometimes, if not necessary, yet useful in States, by bringing forward some improvements in Government ; as with some philosophers we also admit that many good ends in the natural world are answered by volcanos ; still their eruption, in both cases, is tremendous. And as no man, it is probable, would by choice fix on the neighbourhood of a burning mountain as his place of residence ; no man would choose to live under a Government liable to revolutions. In both cases their neighbourhood is dangerous ; and it is not easy to say, in either case, at what distance a people may pronounce themselves in safety. The lava of Vesuvius not only desolated large tracts of circumjacent country ; but it's ashes are said sometimes to have reached Constantinople. Just so, the United States of America, though apparently far removed from the immediate scenes of the revolution in France, is by no means out of the reach of it's effects. America is endangered not only by her connexion and intercourse with

“ avec des Belges, des Bataves, des Germains, des Lombards, des Genoïs,  
 “ des Romains, et réellement assujettis, comme le fut jadis l'empire Romain,  
 “ à cette foule de Barbares, republicanisés dans le sein du Maratisme, et  
 “ dont le faction dominante dans la régence de Paris se servira contre la  
 “ France même, si jamais elle songeait à secouer le joug.” — Lettre à un  
 Ministre d'Etat, en 1797, par Mallet du Pan, p. 3. — How prophetic !

old France ; but much more by her vicinity to some of the French Colonies, where revolution has raged with all the intense fury of the torrid zone. According to a masterly writer \*, in the bosom of the Western Archipelago an immense empire is about to arise, formed by such a people, on such principles, and with such power, as may well make all the Western world, and all who have any connexions with it, to stand aghast with horror.

In all ages mankind have been impressed with a longing desire to pry into futurity. Of such a desire the worst perhaps that can be said is, that it is foolish, because it is useless : yet it is the characteristic of prudence to *foresee evil*, whilst *the simple pass on and are punished*. I would fain hope, then, that it is something more than mere idle curiosity which prompts me to wish it were possible now to know the destinies of three germs, or embryos, of three future British nations ; which, though inconsiderable at present, it is not impossible may some centuries hence give law to a large portion of the globe. These are the States of America, the British Settlements in Hindostan, and that other yet infant Colony (to which the world has no parallel) the “*Populus Latronum*” settled in Botany Bay.

Polybius, in the beginning of his sixth book, observes, that, from an attentive review of past events, “it would be no “hard task” to derive some foresight as to the future, so that a man may “speak with some assurance concerning those “that must hereafter happen†.” He acknowledges, however, that such were the peculiar circumstances of the Roman republic as to render it extremely difficult to pronounce any thing certain concerning their future fortune. It is not

\* Bryan Edwards, Esq. See his Historical Survey of the French Colony in the Island of St. Domingo.

† . . . . Τό, τε προσεῖπεν ὑπὲρ τοῦ μελλόντος συχαζόμενοι ἐκ τῶν ἡδὴ γενομένων, εὐμαρῆς.  
—Polyb. lib. vi. sub init.

less difficult to form even a plausible conjecture what the destiny of the American States will be : because, first, they have no history of their own ; so that, from any thing they have yet done, little can be inferred respecting what they will do : and because, also, the world does not furnish us with the history of any people circumstanced as they are. This difficulty is still farther increased by the singular character of the times, which (owing to an epidemic laxity of principle, and the total abandonment of all plans and systems founded on experience) has already produced some great events, far beyond all the ordinary rules of conjecture or calculation. Even in this awful state of things, however, we may presume to hope, that the exemplification of the effects of such doctrines and practices, as at this moment France is exhibiting to the world, may be sufficient to check this furor, however extensive it's influence may be : and that therefore, like other endemial complaints, this visitation of Heaven, though severe, will not be perpetual. [The future fate of France, Polybius seems very explicitly to have foretold : there having never yet been a *dominatio plebis*, or popular tyranny, which was not in the long-run followed by the arbitrary government of a single person.] After spreading confusion and desolation all over Europe, and deluging it with blood ; after putting back their own country at least a century, checking every valuable improvement in arts and sciences, and miserably diminishing it's population ; this distracted people will at length find safety and peace once more in a monarchy. Their interregnum may be longer, or it may be shorter, than that of England was : a thousand circumstances, of which no human penetration can take cognizance, may hasten or may protract that happy period :—the only conjecture which I presume to offer on the subject, with any confidence, is, that some time or other there will assuredly be a restoration ; and she will owe her restoration to reason and sobriety of conduct, as she



owes her present alienation of mind only to herself. A writer of no ordinary abilities \* on the American Constitution, admitting that the Confederate States “contain an immense extent of territory, presenting to the Atlantic a front of fifteen hundred miles,” would yet fain persuade himself and his countrymen, that these States are an exception to all the world: that a confederate republic has all the force of a monarchical government; and that, in short, by adopting such a form, notwithstanding “the extent of territory, the diversity of climate and soil, the number, greatness, and connection of lakes and rivers with which the United States are intersected and almost surrounded, the vigour and decision of a wide-spreading monarchy may be joined to the freedom and beneficence of a contracted republic †.” Conscious that the only very strong point in the present Constitution of these States is in the attachment and partiality of their people for it, far be it from me in any degree to weaken their reliance, either on this, or on any other opinion that is favourable to the durability of their Government. But, however blind, I add commendably blind, they may be to the defects of their present system, they cannot be insensible that a great and durable republic is certainly a new thing in the world: and that after all the boasted excellence of their confederation, they are, to use the words of an intelligent and elegant historian ‡, in fact, but a feeble combination of “several little republics united only in name; each too weak to preserve dignity, or even to secure independence to its separate governments—and possessing nothing so much in common as occasions for perpetual disagreement.”

\* Mr. Wilson. See Commentaries on the Constitution of the United States of America, p. 26.

† Ibid, p. 34.

‡ Mitford. See his Hist. of Greece, vol. i. p. 47.

As it is just that they who contributed most to bring this great evil of revolution into credit should most feel it's bitter effects, so it is highly probable that the people of these States will have the most reason to lament their success. They set out on principles incompatible with stability; and of course it is natural to suppose that their people, following the example of their founders, will always be prone to revolt and rebellion. With the seed of almost every political evil that can be named, and perhaps, most of all, that of tyranny, thickly sown in their Constitutions, it is hardly possible they should be either easily or well governed; and by being ill governed, they are sure to become an unworthy people—and if unworthy, it is still more certain that they must and will be unhappy \*. However little any nation may

\* Of what kind of people the American States are already composed, the following description, by an avowed friend to Liberty, clearly shews. "What has America to boast of? What are the graces, or the virtues, that distinguish it's inhabitants? What are their triumphs in war, or their inventions in peace? Inglorious soldiers, yet seditious citizens! "sordid merchants, and indolent usurpers!"—Preface to the Dying Negro; a Poem.

This account, as written by a poet and an alien, may be suspected perhaps (though I think unjustly) of exaggeration. Take, then, the account which follows, of the present Americans, from a politician, a man once high in office among his countrymen, and a native of America. "If, indeed, the small degree of order, of restraint and subordination, which has for the last seven years prevailed in our country, be now thrown off, and the legislative and executive powers once more return, in effect, into the hands of committees and conventions: if, in place of that subordination to law and government; of those decent, frugal, and virtuous manners and habits; of that ease, and even affluence, in which our fellow citizens formerly lived in peace and safety: in a word, if, instead of those manners, principles, and circumstances, which once marked our character, the reverse should in future take place and prevail, under a Government too weak to prevent or remedy the evils, there cannot then remain a question on the subject, but such anarchy and confusion must ensue,

may have to boast of, on a review of many incidents in the histories of the best of them, it certainly is some diminution of their reproach, that for many of their blots and blemishes they have since atoned by the performance of many great and good actions ; and over the rest, Time has thrown her kind oblivious mantle. No advantage of this sort belongs to the Americans. All that they have in their history, that is either ancient or venerable, they have in common with that nation which they have renounced. Even the small portion of their history, which is properly their own, is not creditable to them : their revolution began in folly and injustice, and ended, if to their advantage, certainly not to their honour. They have none of those hereditary attachments to country, which are the strong ligatures of government ; nor any of that constitutional devotion to institutions of long standing, which nothing but long habits can form ; for the want of which no new institutions, however wise and salutary, have any adequate compensations to offer. On all these accounts, and many others not necessary to be here recited, I am tempted to conclude, that, after a long series of “dissentions and contests,” the great Continent of North America will become a great empire under a great monarch\*. Meanwhile, the best advice which it is in my power to give to these beginners in government, I give in the words of Xenophon to the Athenians :—“I cannot,” says he, “con-

“scientiously commend the form of government you have  
 “ensue, as to render our independence a curse, and the present and future  
 “age in America as unhappy as any ages to be met with in the history of  
 “civilized nations have ever been.”—An Address to the United States  
 of America, by Silas Deane, Esq. p. 40.

\* “Non Cinnae, non Sullae, longa dominatio : et Pompeii Craffique po-  
 “tentia citò in Caesarem : Lepidi atque Antonii arma in Augustum  
 “cessere ; qui cuncta discordiis civilibus fessa, nomine PRINCIPIS sub im-  
 “perium accepit.”—Tacit. Annal. lib. i. sect. 1.



“ chosen ; yet, since you have chosen it, I not only exhort  
 “ you to support it, but I undertake even to shew you how  
 “ to preserve it. And I can think of no better argument to  
 “ make you tenacious of the Constitution you have framed  
 “ for yourselves, than by assuring you, that, were your Go-  
 “ vernment even worse than I think it, yet it is better for  
 “ you than even a much better Government, which cannot  
 “ be obtained without a civil commotion \*.”

If, indulging this spirit of vaticination respecting the future destiny of America, I might take upon me still farther to form conjectures for ages yet unborn, I would prognosticate, that the final downfall of the present Confederate Government will, like it's origin, come from the North. This has been the usual course of human affairs ; and all the predispositions now existing favour the conjecture. The Northern districts of that immense Continent are not more likely to produce future Goths, Vandals, Huns or Franks, than those of the South are to hold out to them alluring and easy objects of conquest. I go one step farther, and foretell, that the snow-clad deserts of Acadia and Canada will at some future period (I trust, a distant one) finally give law to all North America, and also to the West India islands. They will either be called in, as the Saxons were into this island, as allies to some weak and oppressed State or States, or they will issue, like other Northern hordes, from their own over-stocked hives, in quest of less crowded and more fertile settlements.

To prevent (if it be possible to prevent) for many ages that long succession of tumults and wars which the prospect

\* Having formerly, on a different occasion, quoted this very apposite passage, and marked it as a quotation, I seem to be pretty confident as to it's authenticity and exactness : but I regret that it is not now in my power to refer to the particular book or page of the author from whom it is taken.

of such long-protracted fierce conflicts may be expected to entail on our hapless posterity, prompted by an anxious solicitude for the general weal of mankind, and by an affectionate regard for the best interests of the people both of America and Great Britain, I here suggest an expedient, which, if adopted, seems to bid fair to ensure a permanency of peace to the nations on both sides of the Atlantic.

I lay it down as a maxim, which can on no good grounds be controverted, that as the interests of the great bulk of the people both in Great Britain and in the American States are demonstrably the same; so, when fairly stated and properly understood, all their views respecting those interests are also the same. I also affirm, (and certainly with stronger grounds of probability than any man can have who may see fit to take the contrary side,) that it never was the serious wish either of the one or the other to separate. It will be remembered, that, in making these declarations, I mean the great body of the people in both countries, and with a total disregard to any counter-declarations, however confidently made, of any party men in either country; such men being, at least in this case, utterly unworthy of credit. With this restriction, I farther affirm, that it is the settled persuasion of their judgments, and the most cordial wish of their hearts, to unite again \*. It is not more their inclination, than it is their interest,

\* I have no hesitation to own, that these strong declarations, respecting the undiminished attachment of the people of America to the Parent State, are, as might be expected, made chiefly on the authority of private information. I know, however, of no public counter-declarations which contradict them; and many might be referred to, where they are directly and strongly confirmed. The following, as one of the latest, and in other respects not the least remarkable, is so pointed, that it might almost be suspected to have been written with the same view as that which I am now contemplating:—

“ Born of the same parents, speaking the same language, endowed with  
“ similar

terest, to be again united ; not indeed as formerly, that is to say, as Parent State and Colonies ; nor even on such a footing as Great Britain and Ireland, or as England and Scotland, and still less as France and her newly-created republics are united ; but on the broad basis of two distant, distinct, and completely independent States. They should form an alliance, to comprehend not only a certain community of commercial interests, but, though perfectly independent, some considerable degree of community in government. The subjects of the one should be the subjects of the other ; with this difference only, that though each country should continue

“ similar manners, habits, and dispositions, their hearts” (i. e. those of the people of Great Britain, Ireland, and America) “ are the same ; they yearn  
“ towards each other with fraternal affection : and as they are the most  
“ natural, so will they be the most faithful allies, and the most beneficial  
“ to each other of all the nations of the earth ; and whosoever would set  
“ them at variance, must be the common enemy of both. United, they  
“ may defy the power of all the world : their prosperity, their sovereignty,  
“ their independence, nay their very existence, are connected together. To  
“ America, Great Britain and Ireland, the allegory of the bundle of twigs  
“ may with strictest propriety be applied.

“ They have contended, they have fought, they have bled : the quarrel  
“ is forgotten ; may their wounds never again be opened ! It is not the  
“ genius of this people to bear malice : they are brothers—they stretch  
“ forth their arms across the Atlantic to embrace. Not the fraternizing  
“ hug of France—No !—but the tender, the sentimental embrace of chil-  
“ dren of one family.

“ America reveres the name, and is proud of the virtues, of England.  
“ It is, I repeat it, their interest to coalesce—to be more closely united in  
“ friendship than ever. But, in their union, they will never forget the  
“ rights of humanity, the welfare and happiness of mankind at large.”  
“ I have ever been inclined to regard myself as a citizen of Great Britain,  
“ as well as of America ; and I am persuaded the great majority of my  
“ countrymen think in the same manner.”—A Descriptive Sketch of  
the present State of Vermont, by J. A. Graham, LL.D. &c. in 1797,  
p. 2 & 5.

Apparently



continue to make laws for themselves, the subjects of each should be amenable in all cases to the laws of that in which they resided, with an unrestricted participation of every privilege: so that an American residing in Great Britain, or in any of her dominions, should, during such residence, be, to all intents and purposes, a Briton; and *vice versa*. Each should guarantee the defence of each, not merely as an ally and a friend, but as an integral part of itself, **ONE AND INDIVISIBLE.**

It is no more within my province, than it is within the

Apparently in opposition to the sentiments here recommended, Mr. President Adams, in his speech of the 16th of May last, says roundly, that the States of America "ought not to involve themselves in the political system of Europe, but to keep themselves always distinct and separate from it, if they can." This is so very generally expressed, and qualified also by so many subsequent salvos, as, when fairly analyzed, to amount to little more than a truism. Any of the States or Kingdoms of Europe might say the same: it is, in fact, the actual policy which is at present put in practice both by Sweden and Denmark. As "the political system of Europe" is at present constituted, the President's position is incontrovertible: but, conscious as the President is of "the weight of America in that balance of power," which it is the policy of Europe to support; and conscious also that European alliances are not unnecessary to America to preserve her balance of power, will he contend, that, if such an alliance with an European Power as has been here suggested could be effected, it would then be the interest of America to stand aloof, and to "keep themselves always distinct and separate from the political systems of Europe?" Instead of thus meanly begging, as it were, by a timid caution, to be permitted to remain neutral, it should be the high-spirited yet prudent policy of America to render herself respectable and respected, by an alliance which could have little to hope and less to fear from any of "the political systems of Europe." The President himself will perhaps judge more favourably of this policy, when he reflects, that, should America and Great Britain, through that time-serving system which has so often disgraced and been fatal to their politics, neglect to form such an alliance, mere necessity may ere long compel many of the Powers of Europe to form a general coalition to preserve their own neutrality and independence.

compass of my abilities, to delineate in detail the plan of such a federal union as I am solicitous to recommend between these two great countries. About ten years ago, Sir John Dalrymple, struck with the same ideas on this subject as have now very forcibly impressed themselves on my mind, gave his thoughts to the Public with great clearness, and no less strength \*. It would be difficult to account for the general neglect into which a paper of such profound and important political wisdom has been suffered to fall, were it not known, that this valuable writer, having had the ill fortune, in the course of his researches, to detect the intrigues and the corruptions of some eminent patriots in a preceding age, thereby rendered himself irretrievably unpopular with their successors, the patriots of this age. Few men can be so little acquainted with the character of the times in which we live, as not to know how easy it is for any of the popular leaders of our parties, by various means, to render any writings and any writer unpopular; and not to know also, that no other merits, which either the one or the other may happen to possess, can atone for the demerit of unpopularity.

Unawed, however, even by the apprehensions of a similar fate, I go on to observe, that though perhaps, in the present temper of mankind, a project which neither promises to pull down one party, nor to set up another, has little chance to find either favourers or friends, both countries may ere long be driven to adopt it through necessity. Were it possible that, amidst all this din of party, *the still small voice* of the People, properly so called (which is as far from being clamorous as that of those who on all occasions are so forward to call themselves the people is sure to be so,) could be heard, it would not be necessary to wait to be thus driven. But such are the untoward circumstances both of Great Britain and

\* See his *Memoirs of Great Britain and Ireland*, vol. ii. 4to. 1788. Appendix, No. 2, p. 42.

America in these respects, that those persons who are probably the least qualified, and certainly (as far as having much at stake in the welfare of a State can make it proper for any persons to take a lead in the direction of it's public affairs) the least proper exclusively to become public men (I mean party men), have notwithstanding, in both countries, long been such, and too probably will long continue to be such. O that the people, seeing their error, and their misfortune in thus submitting to be the dupes of those who in general are their superiors only in confidence, would at length have the resolution (the ability they already have) to assert their undoubted right—and no longer bear to be the marketable property of a new species of public men, who study the arts of debate, and pursue politics merely as a gainful occupation! Then, (if haply no prior revolution in either country should before that time have rendered the attempt impracticable,) and then only, might we hope to see the people aroused to some good purpose, and intermeddling in affairs of State with propriety and advantage; and then, too, would this idea of a new, strong and durable confederation be realized. Whenever it is accomplished, it will go a great way towards bringing all the ends of the world together in harmonious contact. A triple cord of irresistible strength would thus be formed by the compact union of three of the happiest countries in three quarters of the world. The East and the West would thus conspire, with amicable and generous rivalry, to supply the European market with their respective overflowings: whilst this QUEEN of ISLES offers them a depôt, in which they may lodge their various merchandises, the most secure, the most central, and in all respects the most advantageous, of any that is to be found in Europe. Even the scantiness of the dimensions of this proposed centre of union would be an advantage to the union, as being most easily defended; and also less likely to interfere with either

of



of the other in any staple produce : and it would be a sufficient gratification of her ambition, that the other members of the union, however superior either in size or opulence, are still her children; and she still their workshop. In such an allotment there is no degradation; if there were, it would be that only of a parent who, no longer under a necessity of labouring for the support of his children, happily has children who think it their honour and happiness to “rock the cradle “of reposing age.”

That towering project of universal Monarchy, for the sake of which France, for centuries past, has convulsed all Europe, and for which she too probably will continue to convulse it for centuries to come, may thus be realized; and this not only without injury or danger to the rest of the world but without exciting the apprehension of any. For such an universal Monarchy would be the sure harbinger of an universal Peace. It's strength would be so far beyond all possibility of competition, that it could have nothing to dread from any assailants. As little would other powers have to dread from it; because the chief aim of such an union would be the forming an insurmountable barrier against ambitious, disorderly and refractory men of all countries. Equally disposed and equally able to overawe aliens into peace, and to keep any turbulent members of it's own within bounds, the clear, simple, and manly rule of it's conduct would be

..... “*Pacificque imponere morem,  
“Parcere subjectis, & debellare superbos.”*

Virg. *Æn.* lib. vi. l. 853.

Hitherto, with all the advantages of her glorious Constitution, it has still been the fate of this island to be distracted by the struggles of contending parties. By whatever different names such parties may, in different periods of our history, have seen fit to be distinguished, it may easily be proved

proved from that history, that, as parties, they have all invariably pursued one end ; of which the real interests of their country have seldom been a part. America, though happily placed without the vortex of European politics, is, however, not less exposed than we are to the arts of factious men of her own ; to whom also the factious of other countries always find easy access : and she has perhaps still less power than we have to resist and defeat their machinations, and to quell domestic broils \*. During their connection with Great Britain, I remember having often heard it remarked, what an instance of felicity it was to the Americans, that, in all their local disputes between one province and another, they could always resort to a competent, impartial, and equitable umpire †. By adopting the union here proposed, America

\* “ This spirit (of party) is inseparable from our nature, having it’s root in the strongest passions of the human mind. It exists under different shapes in all Governments, more or less stifled, controuled, or repressed ; but in those of the popular form, it is seen in it’s greatest rankness, and is truly their worst enemy.

“ The alternate domination of one faction over another, sharpened by the spirit of revenge, natural to party dissension, which in different ages and countries has perpetrated the most horrid enormities, is itself a frightful despotism. But this leads at length to a more formal and permanent despotism. The disorders and miseries, which result, gradually incline the minds of men to seek security and repose in the absolute power of an individual : and sooner or later the chief of some prevailing faction, more able or more fortunate than his competitors, turns this disposition to the purposes of his own elevation, on the ruins of public liberty.

“ Without looking forward to an extremity of this kind, (which nevertheless ought not to be entirely out of sight,) the common and continual mischiefs of the spirit of party are sufficient to make it the duty of a wise people to discourage and restrain it.”—Mr. Washington’s Address, &c. George Town edition, 1796, p. 9.

† This too, I will venture to assert, Ireland had, whilst the British House of Peers was her dernier resort in appeals from her courts of justice.

would

would recover this advantage: “ she would not only gain  
 “ protection in war, that protection which has often saved  
 “ her—and a renewal of the favours to her trade, those fa-  
 “ vours which have enriched her ; but, what is far more  
 “ material to her than either, she would be enabled to en-  
 “ force her own Constitution and Laws . . . . . her su-  
 “ preme power would be strengthened in the imaginations of  
 “ her subjects ; and being entitled, by the terms of the union,  
 “ to ask assistance equally against enemies and rebels, they  
 “ would command that reality of power to protect their  
 “ Constitution, and enforce it’s regulations, without which  
 “ no Government, at least no great Government, ever did, or  
 “ ever can stand \*.”

The present season of apparent repose enjoyed by America is to be regarded rather as an intermission of sickness, than as confirmed health ; kindly granted by Providence, that, profiting by past miscarriages, she may have leisure to devise means effectually to prevent their return. Those persons who have had the most experience of disease, are most likely to understand, and be sensible of, the great value of health. By parity of reasoning, the people of America, having now experienced the danger of an inadequate Government, may seem to be best qualified to appreciate the value of one that is adequate. If they really have obtained this wisdom, and are also in a capacity to carry it into practice, they now may, by the blessing of God, recover that importance, ease, and safety, which, in an evil hour, they lost ; and when they are recovered, they will also better know by what means they may hereafter be preserved. Then, though, in the words of an elegant historian†, the form of government which they have “ chosen be little likely to be lasting in itself, or to give  
 “ power and happiness to those who live under it ; yet, as in

\* Sir John Dalrymple ; see the passage above quoted.

† Mr. Mitford. See his Hist. of Greece, vol. i. p. 183.



“ the natural body, a fever often leads to the renewal of the constitution; so, still more in the political, advantageous establishments commonly owe their very conception to violent disorders.”

If, however, unconvinced of the wisdom and utility of the measure here suggested, deterred by its apparent impracticability, or disheartened through a deficiency of that energy of national character which alone can arouse them to so extraordinary an exertion of public spirit, the people of America should not see fit to countenance this plan, let no supercilious politician of our own, tutored in the chapel of St. Stephen, with his mind wholly occupied with financial calculation, and the balancing of parties, (now become almost the only objects of the study of Statesmen,) rashly ridicule me for venturing yet to hint another expedient, by which, if adopted, we may hope to escape the impending storm, only because it so little accords with any schemes of modern politics. [Ex-  
traordinary times and circumstances call for and justify extraordinary measures.] When, therefore, in 1761, the kingdom of Portugal was invaded by the Spaniards, it was not, in my estimation, merely an effort of despair, but a project of deep and sound political judgment, in the Marquis de Pombal, to propose to remove the seat of government to the Brazils. All due precautions were taken, and calculations made as to the number of vessels necessary to transport the royal family, &c. across the Atlantic \*. The nation shewed great want of wisdom only when they abandoned the project; on the removal of that danger which first suggested it; for, in the present circumstances of Europe, should the principles on which the republic of France is founded ever be completely established, it is romantic to hope that either Portugal, or any other small State, whatever it's form of government may be, can long

\* See Sir Geo. Staunton's Embassy to China, vol. i. p. 181.

preserve any other independence than such as Poland, Brabant, Holland, Italy, &c. have preserved; unless, like Great Britain, they can and will be contented, even during a few short and precarious intervals of peace, to rest on their arms. The people of Portugal will hardly deserve either independency or freedom, if, when ere long it may haply be in their power to resume this project, it is not resumed and carried into effect. This golden opportunity the Dutch, cramped by the narrow and contracted system of their local politics, have now lost for ever. Had that people, hitherto regarded as eminently sagacious, on the first breaking out of the present confusions, when it was known that their country was the chief object of the revolutionary rage, instead of those divided and distracted politics by which they have been undone, manfully resolved to migrate to the Cape of Good Hope, they might, instead of being now one of the unlustrious satellites of France, still have been a great and happy nation. Admitting, then, (what is almost too dreadful to admit, even hypothetically,) that there is now no hope left of any future permanent peace to Europe, and that America, secure, as she may imagine she is, in her isolated situation, resolves to stand aloof, what is to hinder Great Britain, whilst yet she possesses fleets, wealth, skill, and spirit, and above all, whilst yet she possesses her ancient uncontaminated principles, from transporting her empire to the East? There, in the peninsula of India, without abandoning either her dominions in Europe, or in the West Indies, she might possess a territory inferior in extent only to the neighbouring kingdom of China; who, from her love of peace, would be as good a neighbour—as France, from its contrary character, always has been, and always will be, a bad one. There, happy in being placed beyond the troubled politics of Europe, blessed with a soil and a climate equal to any on the globe, with every possible circumstance in our favour for commerce, we might, without  
any

any of that great danger which must ever attend the attempt in an old establishment, repair and renovate our Constitution : and there, undisturbed by republican projects, so abhorrent to the genius of Asia, we should need no alliance ; but leave our posterity, if true to one another, at peace with themselves and with all the world.

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IT now remains only that I entreat my Readers to accept with candour and kindness this well-meant endeavour to communicate to them some information, and to render them some service. For my principles and my doctrines I ask no other indulgence than that, in this age of liberty, I may at length be permitted to avow them, if without praise, yet without danger. My sincerity, I trust, will not be questioned. If, in stating what I believe to have been facts, I have erred, it must be owned that I have gone wrong with such means of being right as not many others have enjoyed. Nor can I with decency be contradicted in these statements, by any man, who, even with superior talents, has not had equal opportunities of forming his judgment, nor given the same unequivocal proofs of his sincerity.

That many of the doctrines maintained in this Volume are no longer in fashion, I am not now to learn. They were not adopted, however, without examination : and having adopted them, I could neither be so base towards others as to recommend such doctrines as, though more popular, did not appear to me to be founded in truth—nor so disingenuous to myself as to be ashamed to avow what I do believe to be true. Sincerely do I wish that my creed on these topics was more popular ; for my mind is of no such texture nor temperament as to find any pleasure in being singular. I protest still more vehemently against any imputations of being actuated by any political resentments. It is not, I believe, of the nature of such sentiments to be permanent :



at least I can and do declare for myself, that if ever I did entertain any prejudices against any men, which were more violent than just, I have long outlived them. I feel, at this moment, infinitely less chagrin and indignation at the recollection of the confiscation of my property, (though it was my all,) and the proscription of my person, (by which I was solemnly declared to be a traitor,) than I do on reading one of Buonaparte's gasconading and insidious proclamations—or the speeches of our own pretended patriots, who can bear to see their country at the feet of an insolent and inveterate enemy. Under every imputation of weakness, resentment, or corruption, to which I may be subjected on giving my work to the public, I console myself with the reflection of one who, through good report and through evil report, spent his life in humanizing and improving mankind. “There is, and ever will be, justice enough in the world to afford patronage and protection for those who endeavour to advance truth and virtue, without any regard to the prejudices and passions of any particular cause and faction\*.”

I was so exceedingly discouraged by the general prejudice, which ever since the last peace has prevailed in this nation against this subject, that these pieces (though some of them were professedly written with a view to publication) have thus long been kept from the public. In America, it is well known, long before I left it, the press was shut to every publication of the kind. But, seeing now, as the people of both countries cannot but see with alarm, one of the dreadful effects of the American revolt in the still more dreadful revolution of France, I cannot but flatter myself that they will now, both of them, listen not only with patience, but with some degree of interest, to statements and reasonings, which, though the productions of a loyalist, are intended to be fair and impartial. To the Americans, in general, various matters suggested in this Preface and in these Discourses are

of the utmost moment : for, by the establishment of a tremendous republic in France, the state of the World in general, and of Great Britain and America in particular, are no longer what they were when the independence of America was settled. That tremendous republic, it has been justly observed by a great Statesmen, now no more, is in it's essence " inimical to all other governments : it has, by it's essence, a " faction of opinion, of interest, and of enthusiasm in every " country. To us, it is a Colossus, which bestrides our Channel. It has one foot on a Foreign shore, and the other " upon the British soil. Thus advantaged, if it can at all " exist, it must finally prevail \*." Already have some free and distant States been swallowed up by it. Not only monarchies, which are the chief objects of it's vindictive rage, have been shaken to their centre, but whole republics have been annihilated. The ancient Governments of Holland, Genoa, and Venice, (and, whilst I write, many in Germany,) are falling to pieces. The United States of America indeed still exist, and are still independent : yet, at a distance as they happily are from immediate contagion, they have already felt that they are not out of the reach of her fatal influence.

In transcribing these Discourses for the Press, as my own opinions and principles have undergone no change, I have made a conscience of delivering them to the public very nearly as they were delivered from the pulpit. No assertion, however hazardous or hardy, has been suppressed : many things, which, though relevant and necessary at the time, are now no longer so, have notwithstanding been retained, merely for the sake of consistency. Some repetitions and seeming contradictions have been expunged, inaccuracies corrected, and local allusions explained. The only material alteration which my work has received is in the annexation of various notes ; many of which, though not all, have been now first

\* Mr. Burke's Two Letters, 1796, p. 22.

added. These I have been tempted to add from a natural anxiety to justify some opinions of my own by the suffrages of Authors of high credit; being aware, that many of these opinions are such as may be challenged for their singularity\*.

I am not conscious that I have any where availed myself either of the words or the arguments of other writers, without acknowledging my obligations: if, however, any such passages have escaped me (a circumstance which is more than possible), I hope to be pardoned both by the Authors to whom I am indebted for an expression or a sentiment, and by my Readers, in consideration of the length of time which has passed since the Discourses were first written; things which three or four and twenty years ago were fresh in my memory have now long been forgotten.

After the Publication, through various causes, had been  
so

\* A writer, who is fond of Note-writing, is pleased to say, that "perhaps all Notes to Sermons, however excellent, had better be omitted: they should be wrought into the body of the work." See Pursuits of Literature, part the ivth, p. 85. In Sermons written and intended to be delivered only from the pulpit, no doubt, Notes would be incongruous, if indeed they could find a place: but when such compositions (which admit of a variety of topics) are addressed to the world at large, every author seems to be at liberty to dispose of his materials according to his own judgment; to call his productions essays, treatises, discourses, or sermons; to crowd all the observations he may see fit to make into the body of his work; or, for the sake of illustration, corroboration, or any other reason, to throw many collateral remarks into the form of Notes. All that is of any moment in the case is, that the matter communicated, whether in a Note or otherwise, be pertinent and relevant. If I might be permitted, without giving offence, to add yet one Note more to this Note upon Notes, I would avail myself of the opportunity it affords me of expressing my regret, that a writer of such sound principles and unquestionable abilities should have stained his page by so unnecessary, not to say so uncharitable, an attack on a very meritorious body of men—the Emigrant French Clergy. In no age or country was there ever a greater sacrifice made to conscience, than has been made by these persecuted exiles: even among the Apostles,  
consisting



so long delayed, it was my intention that the Work should be posthumous, from an idea that my thus sealing it as it were with my last breath would be the most solemn attestation to it's veracity in my power to give it. But, when it was represented to me that it might appear something like cowardice not to dare to step forward to defend what I have dared to allege, I could no longer shrink from the publication of my Volume whilst I still live to be answerable for it's contents. That there are many errors and defects in my Work is highly probable : all I have to plead in their behalf is, that, as far as I know my own heart, they are involuntary. Any controversy about my doctrines I beg leave to decline ; and, at the age of threescore, a request to be excused from such a task, I hope, will not be deemed unreasonable. But, if I have mis-stated a single fact, and much more

consisting only of twelve, there was one traitor : in the Grand Rebellion in England, and in the Revolt of America, though a large majority of the Established Clergy were loyal and firm, truth and candour compel us to own, that, in proportion to our numbers, there were far more defections from principle and duty than there have now been in France. A fair list of all the Secular Clergy of France at the commencement of the revolution, stating with exactness how few there were who could be tempted to preserve even life and liberty by the abandonment of their principles, would, in these degenerate times, do honour to human nature, and still more to Christianity. That it is highly creditable to the venerable order of men to which they belong, even their numerous and inveterate enemies must admit. Their conduct in exile has been no less exemplary : patient, resigned and pious, they submit to their heavy calamity with invincible fortitude : of no misdemeanor, hardly of any accidental error in conduct, have they been proved to be guilty since they took shelter among us. Of what other class of men, equally numerous, could so much be said ?

To imagine that such a body of men, so principled, so humbled, without either motive or means, should disturb our national religion, is not only paying to Popery such a compliment as it does not deserve, but is also casting such a reflection both on our religion and our abilities to defend it, as, God be thanked, we may also say we do not deserve !

if I have misrepresented and wronged any man, however obscure, or however obnoxious; on it's being pointed out to me, I will, with much pleasure, retract such misrepresentation, and ask pardon of the person whom I have involuntarily injured.

For any defects in the composition, I throw myself on the candour of the Public, who no doubt will make all-due allowances for the extreme difficulty and abstruseness of some of the subjects; the choice of which was not left to me: difficulties rendered still greater by the adventitious entanglements and perplexities in which they have been involved by some writers of no ordinary note; who, not being able to clear them up in a way that was consistent with their own views, have contrived to render them still more complex, and still more difficult, merely by the subtleties of argumentation. The times also were peculiarly difficult: it was oftentimes hardly less necessary to attend to the manner than to the matter; and it was of less moment that an unpalatable sentiment should be strongly or aptly expressed than that it should, if possible, be so expressed as to afford no handle for very obnoxious exceptions or cavils. Cast, as my lot was, by Providence, in a situation of difficult duty, in such an hour of danger, it would have been highly reproachful to have slept on my post. Investigations of the important subjects of religion and government \*, when conducted with sobriety and decorum, can never be unseasonable; but they seem to be particularly called for in times like those in which these

\* “ The only subjects worth a wise man's notice are *religion* and *government*; such religion and government, I mean, which exclude not, as too oft they do, *morality* and *politics*; and these are subjects that at the same time most need his attention. For though they be ordained to one end, to perfect man's nature; yet, as they pursue it by different means, they must act in conjunction, lest the diversity of the means should retard or defeat the attainment of the concurrent end.”—Bp. Warburton's *Dedication of the Alliance between Church and State.*

Discourses were written—times when *the kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers took counsel together against the Lord and against his Anointed, saying, Let us break their bonds asunder, and cast away their cords from us* \*.

*If, therefore, in complying with this call, I have done well, and as is fitting the story, it is that which I desired; but if slenderly and meanly, it is that which I could* †.

“These Sermons were preached with a very single eye; that is, with a sincere intention of conscientiously performing my duty, and approving myself to God in my station, by doing what lay in me (at a time of exigence) to confirm the wavering, to animate the diffident, to contain, excite, and advance all in their loyalty and firm adhesion to his gracious Majesty, our present, alone, rightful liege lord and sovereign.” And they are published, because it is not only necessary and proper that Churchmen should do their duty, but that the world should know how they do it; and thus see and own that we are and will be honest ‡.” They are published (to use the words of another great writer of our Church) “though for no other cause, yet for this, that posterity may know we have not loosely, through silence, permitted things to pass away as in a dream §.”

If haply this Volume should find it's way into those distant regions where the greatest part of it was first produced, and there should still be living any of those old friends with whom, in critical times, I formerly *took sweet counsel together*, I entreat them to remember me as one who loved them and their country, if not wisely, yet well. If it should be so for-

\* Psal. ii. ver. 2.

† 2 Macc. xv. ver. 38.

‡ Bp. Wetenhall's Preface to his Loyal Sermons, preached in Ireland in 1695.

§ See the first sentence in the Preface to Hooker's Ecclesiastical Polity.



## P R E F A C E.

fortunate as to fall into the hands of any of the inhabitants of the different parishes which I held in Virginia and in Maryland\*, (many of whom once were my willing hearers, and, at the risque of more than blame, listened with a respectful attention to several of these very Sermons,) I intreat their acceptance of them in their present form. I intreat them to consider this Book as the legacy of one who still bears it in mind, with pleasure and with pride, that he once was their faithful and favourite pastor. In this world we are severed, to meet no more; but we may meet again when ere long both they and I shall be called on to give account (at a tribunal where passion and prejudice can have no place)—they, how they received instruction—and I, what instruction I communicated, and in what manner. God grant that neither they may have been *unprofitable hearers*—nor I, *after having preached to others, myself be a castaway!*

\* The Vestry of the Parish of Hanover in the County of King George, in that part of Virginia which is called the Northern Neck, did me the honour to nominate me to the Rectory of their Parish, in 1761, before I was in orders. Tempted by the conveniency of a better house and a glebe, I afterwards held the Parish of St. Mary's, in Caroline County, Virginia, lying on the same navigable river of Rappahanock. When the late Sir Robert Eden, Bart. became the Governor of Maryland, he was pleased to appoint me Rector of St. Anne's in Annapolis, and afterwards of Queen Anne's in Prince George's County, from which I was ejected at the Revolution.

This list of my preferments (set down here merely to avoid a cumbrous account of them in my title-page) is not large; but they were honourably obtained, and I reflect on them with gratitude. All I have to add to this list is, the small living which I now hold, bestowed on me thirteen years ago, without solicitation, by an eminent scholar, who then knew me only by character.

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JUDG. xvii. 5, 6. And the man Micah had an house of gods, and made an ephod and teraphim, and consecrated one of his sons, who became his priest. In those days there was no king in Israel, but every man did what was right in his own eyes - 46

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GEN. xiii. 7, 8. And there was a strife between the herdsmen of Abram's cattle, and the herdsmen of Lot's cattle: and the Canaanite and the Perizzite dwelled then in the land. And Abram said unto Lot, Let there be no strife between thee and me, I pray thee! and between thy herdsmen and my herdsmen; for we be brethren - - - - - 325



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ON THE CHARACTER OF ABSALOM.

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- 2 SAM. xviii. 33. And the king was much moved, and went up to the chamber over the gate, and wept: and as he went, thus he said, O my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom! would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son! 376

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ON THE CHARACTER OF AHITOPHEL.

- 2 SAM. xvii. 23. And when Ahitophel saw that his counsel was not followed, he saddled his ass, and arose, and gat him home to his house, and put his household in order, and hanged himself, and died, and was buried in the sepulchre of his father - - - - - 402

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- JOSH. xxii. 22. The Lord God of gods—the Lord God of gods—he knoweth, and Israel he shall know, if it be in rebellion, or if in transgression against the Lord (save us not this day)—— - - - - - 450

DISCOURSE XII.

ON CIVIL LIBERTY; PASSIVE OBEDIENCE, AND NON-RESISTANCE.

- GAL. v. 1. Stand fast, therefore, in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free - - - - - 495

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## A FAREWELL SERMON.

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NEH. vi. 10, 11. Afterward I came unto the house of She-  
maiah, the son of Delaiah, the son of Mehetabeel, who was  
shut up: and he said, Let us meet together in the house of  
God, within the temple, and let us shut the doors of the  
temple; for they will come to slay thee, yea in the night  
will they come to slay thee. And I said, Should such a man  
as I flee? and who is there that, being as I am, would go  
into the temple to save his life? I will not go in - - 561

## E R R A T A.

### Page Line

- 56 1 dele *in vain*.
- 109 20 after *laws*, before *have*, insert *to*.
- 111 in the note, dele the commas marking a quotation, after *Christianity*.
- 118 16 after *doctrine*, insert a comma.
- 149 26 for *them* read *the*, and before *jealous* insert *people*.
- 180 25 dele *from it*.
- 181 26 read *oil-olive*.
- 186 6 for *texture*, read *feature*.
- 191 3 for *bad*, read *bas*; and ditto, l. 9, dele *the bad*.
- 193 27 place a full stop after *invaded*. and begin the next sentence with a capital T.
- 194 19 after *matter*, dele the comma.
- 199 20 dele the comma after *instances*, place one after *abundance*, and dele that after *men*.
- Ditto 27 dele the comma after *education*, put the mark of a parenthesis before a *picture*, and another after *the life*.
- 213 16 dele *neither*.
- 248 2 dele *But* and the comma after it, and put a capital R to *religious*.
- 270 16 for *any* read *some*.
- 284 14 place marks of quotation before *injudicious*, and after *designing*.
- 286 6 for *even* read *ever*.
- 290 16 put a comma after *him*; and l. 17, a comma also, instead of a semicolon, after *the Lord*.
- 308 26 read *great*.
- 310 19 for *comprehensibly*, read *comprehensively*.
- 367 1 of the note, dele the semicolon after *circumstances*, and put a comma there.
- 467 5 read *tribes*.
- 567 20 dele *a defeat*: and l. 23. insert *a defeat* at the beginning of the line.
- 590 first note, l. 1, after the first *eyes*, add a comma: and l. 2, of ditto, after *lib. iii.* add § 6.
- 591 3 put the bracket of a parenthesis; a comma after *bad*, and another after *lately*; and dele *alone*: and l. 5, put another parenthesis bracket after *reading*.



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## DISCOURSE I.

ON THE PEACE IN 1763\*.

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ISAIAH, ch. ii. ver. 4.

— *They shall beat their swords into plow-shares, and their spears into pruning-hooks : nation shall not lift up sword against nation ; neither shall they learn war any more.*

A STATE of war is incompatible with a state of innocence : had the world, therefore, before the Fall, been peopled as it now is, perfect tranquillity would have been the lot of the human race : but our first parents, though they were sheltered and protected in Paradise from natural and moral evil, were no sooner driven out than they were exposed to the fury of the elements, and to the conflicts of ungovernable passions : and the evil spirit of discord and strife, which first armed brother against brother, hath descended, like an hereditary leprosy, to all suc-

\* Preached at the Upper-Church, and at Bray's, in Leeds-Town, in Hanover Parish, King George's County, Virginia.

ceeding generations. The Heathens, more fallen than their brethren of the Patriarchal race, (among whom the splendour of the original revelation, though often dimmed, was never wholly extinguished,) appear to have entertained a rooted aversion to a life of harmony and brotherly love. Their history, as recorded by Scripture, is one unvaried scene of carnage and desolation: nor can we be surpris'd, that, in times when warfare was the predominant passion and employment of mankind, moral excellence and military prowess should be confounded; and that even among the most civilized of Pagan nations, the same appellation should be applied to valour and to *virtue* \*.

\* It is singular, that, in several languages, the same word which signifies a robber, or one who subsists by rapine, also signifies a soldier. In Latin, *latro* is not unfrequently used to denote a soldier. Thus, in Plautus, “Ego idem *latrones* hostes bello & *virtute* contudi.” *Amphitryon*. act. iv. sc. 6. l. 54. And again:

“Rex Seleucus me opere oravit maximo

“Ut tibi *latrones* cogerem & conscriberem.”

*Miles Gloriosus*, act. i. sc. 1. l. 75.

Even so late and accurate a writer as Cicero also uses *latrocinium* in the sense of *open war*: “Sine dubio perdidimus hominem, magnificèque vicimus, cum illum ex occultis insidiis in apertum *latrocinium* conjecimus.” *Orat. in Catilinam*, 2da, § 1.

In like manner, the French term *brigand* (which is, originally, a Celtic compound, denoting the men of the farther, or distant, kents, or hills, afterwards called *brigantes*;) denotes both a freeman, a mountaineer, a soldier, and a robber: all the characters, it is probable, having formerly been often comprised in one. From *brigand* the word *brigade* is obviously derived. In the Gaelic also, a *ketterin* originally signified a warrior, but now means only an Highland free-booter.

From



From the peculiar circumstances of their country, their government, and their religion, the Jews had stronger inducements than most other nations to avoid war, and to cultivate peace. But, adopting too often, along with their idolatries, the fiercer policy of the surrounding nations, they, not unfrequently, reversed the injunction of the text, and *beat their plow-shares into swords, and their pruning-hooks into spears*\* : and hence, at the time of our Saviour's appearance, inhumanity, blood-thirstiness, and war, had well nigh become the general character of the world. It was the proper province of the *Prince of Peace* to restore the kingdom of peace.

This restoration of peace under the kingdom of the Messiah is the principal circumstance alluded to by the text : of which, however, different men have given somewhat different interpretations. It has sometimes been understood, as merely foretelling that very general peace which took place in the world at the particular juncture of our Saviour's Advent. Historians have informed us, that the Roman empire, which then comprehended the fairest portion of the civilized world, enjoyed such profound tranquillity, that, soon after the battle of Actium, the temple of Janus was for the third time shut. It

\* "Sarcula cessabant, versique in pila ligones."

Ovid. Fast. 1.

"..... squalent abductis arva colonis,

"Et curvæ rigidum falces constantur in enses."

Virg. Georg. lib. i. l. 507.

was highly providential that, though the decree for enrolling the people had been issued a few years before, on the occasion of a former peace, yet, owing to the breaking out of fresh troubles, it had been delayed, and was now again enforced. It was in this period of tranquillity, that Augustus Cæsar issued a decree, that *all the world should be taxed*; in obedience to which, *Joseph, and Mary his espoused wife, then great with child*, went up into Bethlehem, the destined birth-place of the Messiah. And it has often been shewn, how propitious this circumstance of an universal peace was to the future promulgation of the Gospel.

But, it is objected, that this could not be the whole of the sense of the prophecy; not only because the peace of that period was of a short duration, but also because the peace which was in the contemplation of the prophet was peculiar to the kingdom of Christ. This is admitted; and, of course, it is also admitted, that the first and most direct reference of the prophecy is to the breaking down of the Jewish partition wall, and the calling in of the Gentiles. The imagery, as delineated in the text, is natural; and particularly proper, as applied to Judea: which, being a land of vines, as well as a land of corn, required both the *pruning-hook* and the *plough*: and being also, notwithstanding all the various advantages, derived either from its situation, or its government, still exposed to the incursions of various surrounding warlike nations, its inhabitants were too often under

the

the necessity of changing the harmless implements of the husbandman, for the destructive weapons of the foldier.

The true sense, then, of the whole of my text, seems to be this. When Christianity should become the universal religion of mankind, then, laying aside all former enmities, the whole world should unite, and (cemented by the strong bonds of Christian faith and Christian charity) literally be one people \*. The Jew should

\* This almost miraculous change of temper, effected by Christianity, is well exemplified by Tertullian, in the instance of St. Paul; who, before his conversion, had *breathed out threatenings and slaughter against, and even persecuted to death, the converts to Christianity.* After his conversion, he changed his sword into a pen; and his spear into the gentler, but more efficacious, weapons of Christian argument and persuasion. A ravenous wolf, like Benjamin, *in the morning he divided the prey, and at night he divided the spoil.*

Tertull. adversus Gnosticos, cap. xiii.

“*Et concident macheras suas in aratra, & zibynas in falces: id est, animorum nocentium, & linguarum infestarum, & omnis malitiæ atque blasphemix ingenia convertent in studia modestiæ & pacis. Et non accipiet gens supra gentem machæram, utique discordiæ; & non discent amplius bellare, i. e. inimicitias perficere; ut et hic discas Christum non bellipotentem, sed paciferum, re promissum.*”——Tertull. advers. Marcion. lib. iii. cap. 21.

“Quamquam ista quæ dicitis bella religionis nostræ ob invidiam commoveri, non sit difficile comprobare, post auditum Christum in mundo, non tantum non aucta, verum etiam ex parte furiarum compressionibus imminuta. Nam cum hominum vis tanta (nempe per omnes gentes diffusa) magisteriis ejus acceperimus & legibus, malum malo non rependi oportere; suum potius fundere, quam



should embrace the Gentile, and the Gentile the Jew ; and the only rivalry between the most contending nations thenceforward should be, who could best promote the glory of their Master's kingdom (not as the Jews had too often sought to advance their temporal glory ; not in the way that has since been taken by the Impostor of the East, by arms, and by war ; but) by displaying that temper of meekness and forbearance which are the eminent characteristics of Christianity. And the true disciples of Jesus are, in fact, all, of this blessed evangelical temper. Whatever be their nation or condition, Christians are, by profession, peaceable, and peace-makers. The spirit of contention, and the spirit of war, belong not to the character of Christians ; who are taught to consider it as the first condition of their religion to be (like their Master) *meek and lowly, and not easily provoked* ; and of such unbounded charity as to love even their enemies\*.

After

“ alieno pollueret manus & conscientiam cruore ; habet à Christo  
 “ jamdudum orbis ingratus, per quem feritatis mollita est rabies,  
 “ atque hostiles manus cohibere à sanguine cognati animantis oc-  
 “ cœpit.”—Arnobius adv. Gentes, lib. i. p. m. 5, 6.

\* The promulgation of Christianity not only rescued the world from numberless other evils, but, in some degree, from the ravages of war. Such was the sad state of things previous to the coming of the *Prince of Peace*, that, according to Eusebius, even boys learned the art of war : and even in villages, the country men (as though they had been stung by the oestrus, or possessed by a demon) were perpetually fighting with each other. But no sooner did Christ appear,

After all, it is not necessary to restrain this memorable prophecy to events that have already happened. Like some other prophecies, and some other parts of Scripture, this probably has not yet had its full completion. It will then only be fulfilled when, after a long day of darkness, during which the Church of Christ has been eclipsed by the thick clouds of ignorance and irreligion, it shall please God, by the bright beams of the glorious Sun of the Gospel, to dispel error, and to cause truth to shine forth with all its own celestial splendour. *The fulness of the Gentiles shall come in, and the Captain of our Salvation, spiritually going forth conquering and to conquer, shall subdue all his enemies. And then we too, and all his servants, having fought the good fight of faith, shall accomplish our warfare, and obtain that blessed rest promised to his Church now militant here upon earth.*

Thus considered, the text perfectly well harmonizes with the whole scheme of Christianity; which undoubtedly is, that *righteousness and peace should kiss each other*; and that, *in Jesus the world might have*

appear, than all that had been foretold began to be fulfilled. The power of the Romans, heretofore so irresistible, was no longer invincible; and, though the spiritual kingdom of the Messiah certainly did not at all interfere with the civil power of any kingdom, yet the establishment of Christianity and the decline of this great Pagan empire were almost co-eval. And, from that time to this, war (all horrid as it still is) has worn an aspect somewhat less ferocious and inhuman,——Eusebii Præparat. Evangelic. lib. i. folio, p. 10.

*peace.*] One of the first duties of Christianity therefore is that, both as individuals and as communities, we should all *follow after the things which make for peace*; and, *as far as it is possible, live peaceably with all men*. Viewed even in a political light only, war seems to be as incompatible with an improved state of Society, as it certainly is with the doctrines of the Gospel; and it is a circumstance not a little to the credit of our religion, that it so decidedly discountenances it. War is a relic of barbarism; and therefore still to be considered as the virtue only of an uncultivated people \*. And however offensive it might sound in the ears of some refined nations, who value themselves on being also military nations, were we to go into the investigation in any detail, there is reason to believe it would be found that the most savage people are in general the most warlike †.

When,

\* The unnatural and shocking consequences of war are summarily (but pathetically and strongly) described in a speech of Cræsus to Cyrus, in the Cljo of Herodotus:

— ἐδὲς γὰρ οὕτω ἀνάντος ἐστὶ, ὅς τις πόλεμον πρὸ εἰρήνης αἰρέεται. ἐν μὲν γὰρ τῇ οἱ παῖδες τὰς πατέρας δάπτωσι, ἐν δὲ τῷ, οἱ πατερες τὰς παῖδας.

A similar passage occurs in Demades the orator, preserved only in the rude verses of Tzetzes, Chiliad. vi. 20.

And Polybius, in contrasting the blessings of peace with the miseries of war, has adopted the remark, and almost the very words of Herodotus.

† This proposition is far from implying, that the *least* warlike nations are the *most* virtuous. Every friend to Christianity must deprecate the wars in which Great Britain has so often been engaged:

but,



When, therefore, a writer on Ethics lately called the various tribes of Indians around us *nations of heroes\**, though the term was perhaps strictly just and proper, it certainly conveyed no compliment to the Indians, as he no doubt intended it should. The words describe Indians exactly as they are; that is, as warriors and savages. As individuals, soldiers may be, and I sincerely believe generally are, distinguished for their humanity, no less than for their courage: but, as a body, they are the pests and the scourges of the world †.

It

but, at the same time it must be admitted, that we possess a taste for the social arts, a spirit of manly sentiment, of industry, and of integrity, which are rarely met with among some of the more peaceable nations of the southern parts of Europe. In modern Greece, in Italy, and in Portugal, (which certainly are no longer military nations,) idleness, treachery, and cowardice are said to be the predominant features of national character.

\* Dr. Smith, in his Theory of Moral Sentiments.

† “In reality, were all his (Alexander’s) actions duly estimated, he could deserve no other character than that of the great cut-throat of the age in which he lived. But, the folly of mankind, and the error of historians, is such, that they usually make the actions of war, bloodshed, and conquest, the subject of their highest encomiums; and those their most celebrated heroes that most excel therein. Whereas those only are true heroes, who most benefit the world, by promoting the peace, welfare, and good of mankind: but such as oppress it with the slaughter of men, the desolation of countries, the burning of cities, and the other calamities which attend war, are the scourge of God, the Attilas of the age in which they live, and the greatest plagues and calamities that can happen to it; and which are never sent into the world  
“ but

It is not one of the least objections to war that it occasions a perversion and misapplication of fine talents. How many men, with dispositions naturally good, who, under a well-regulated system, might and would have been the guardians and benefactors, have become the butchers and destroyers, of their kind! Great parts are not so common, that the world can afford to bear the loss of them. When we see a Julius Cæsar, with all his vast natural and acquired powers, stooping to be a mere warrior, we must lament the waste of such abilities. Compare, I pray you, any of the most celebrated commanders, with whose fame the world resounds; compare them, I say, with a Socrates, a Fenelon, or a William Penn; and if good parts, directed to the attainment of good ends, be the criterion of a great character, see how, on the comparison, every mere hero will hide his diminished head. True greatness deserves all the honour that the world can pay to it: but, fields dyed with blood are not the scenes in which true greatness is most likely to be found. He who simplifies a mechanical process, who supplies us with a new convenience or comfort, or even he who contrives an elegant superfluity, is, in every proper sense of the phrase, a more useful man than any of those masters in the art of destruction, who, to the shame of the

“but for the punishment of it, and therefore ought as such to be  
 “prayed against, and detested by all mankind.”——Prideaux’s  
 Connections, part i. book 7. vol. 2d. 8vo. p. 700.

world,

world, have hitherto monopolized almost all its honours.

It is at least harmless, if it be not also rational, to indulge a fond hope, that the period cannot be very distant when, from the silent and unnoticed, but gradually prevailing, influence of Christianity, France and Great Britain, (the two foremost nations of the world, which have just now sheathed the sword,) taught by long experience the better *arts of peace*, shall *learn war no more*. O that we might live to see the time when they should give law to the world in peace, as they have long done in war! Such would be the great and blessed influence of such an era in the world that he only would be the enthusiast who should not hail it as a millennium.

It is no part of my purpose at present to enter into the question how far war is, or is not, lawful to Christians. Merely as a point of casuistry, it might (perhaps) after all my pains, remain with you, (as I confess is the case as to myself,) undecided: but neither you nor I can for a moment entertain a doubt, that war is one of the severest calamities with which the Almighty has ever seen fit to chastise the sons of men. As war in the elements desolates the natural world, wars among men disorder and destroy all the beauties of the moral world. Thunder and lightning, and hurricanes, and volcanos, are not more fatal in their respective spheres. It would not, I believe, be difficult to prove, from history, that no nation ever yet engaged in war, without being eventually a loser by it.



it\*. If any people can be thought an exception to this remark, it must be the Romans; who, owing their origin to war, seem to have pursued it, through their whole history, as a trade, and the means of their subsistence. And yet their greatest orator, in a flourishing period of their empire, scrupled not to prefer an inadequate and unjust peace to the justest war†.

Not much, if at all, more civilized than the barbarous nations around us were the proud masters of the world. Their history is composed of little else than a wearisome succession of incursions and invasions, which, on the slightest pretensions, they were for ever making on their more peaceful, but less powerful, neighbours. These wars, however dignified by history, are, when philosophically considered, in no point of view of more consequence than those of Creek, Catawba, or Cherokee Indians; who want but a Thucydides, or a Livy, to render them as renowned as the Romans. Let but Indians be measured by Roman ideas, and they are not inferior to

\* . . . . . "nocitura petuntur

"Militiâ." . . . . . Juvenal. Sat. x. l. 9.

† . . . . . "equidem pacem hortari non desino; quæ vel injusta  
"utilior est quam justissimum bellum." Cicer. Epist. ad Atticum,  
lib. vii. epist. 14.

. . . . . "Pax optima rerum,

"Quas homini novisse datum est; pax una triumphis

"Innumeris potior."

Silius Italicus, lib. xi. l. 595.

Romans :

Romans: the Romans were warriors, and so are our North American Indians: the Romans were the scourge and the terror of the neighbouring nations; and such, we too well know, Indians also are. Wonderful are the ways of Providence! It was by the sword alone that the Romans became a people; and by the sword they ceased to be a people. A state of constant war naturally rendered them irritable and quarrelsome. Hence, when they had, as they boasted, subdued the world, and no foreign enemies were left for them to contend with, they quarrelled among themselves, and fell the victims of civil war. And who does not see, that these ill-fated nations, whom I have presumed to compare with Romans, must ere long, from their own natural propensity to war, and from our illiberal and unchristian system of fomenting their intestine quarrels and wars, be also totally destroyed? Already their numbers are greatly diminished; and they will too surely continue to diminish, unless, happily for ourselves as well as for them, we shall hereafter be so wise and humane as to observe a more just and generous policy towards them. Would we but learn to regard them as human beings, capable of civilization, they might soon be brought to *break their bows, and knap their spears asunder; and beat their swords into plow-shares.*

Our parent state, and the great and powerful kingdom, her neighbour, are, and long have been, rival nations; the Carthage and Rome of modern times. The comparison hitherto has failed in one respect,

respect, indeed, that though they have had as many and as bloody wars as old Rome and old Carthage had, these wars have not yet effected the destruction of either. If it could be ascertained how much blood and how much treasure each of these two nations has, from age to age, expended in wars against each other; and contrasted with a similar enumeration of their respective conquests and acquisitions, it would enable both themselves and the world to form a fair estimate of the sum-total of their respective profit and loss. And I am much mistaken if the result would not be that all the territory, and all the advantages which, in all their wars, either has gained from the other, would be dearly paid for by the expenditure of a single year.

If the manifestos of the contending parties might be received as proofs, wars would always appear to be unavoidable and just. When, however, these appeals to the public contradict each other (as they necessarily must, and always do) it is impossible that both can be right. In the war now happily terminated we of this western world were immediately interested: and therefore our opinion of its justice may perhaps be suspected of partiality. As a counter-balance to this objection, it might be alledged, that, from our situation, we have had better means, and, from our more immediate interest, were stimulated by stronger motives, to obtain exact information respecting the true grounds of the quarrel, than the people either of France or England: and, with  
this



this advantage in forming our judgments, we have, both as a public and as individuals, again and again, declared the war to have been, on our parts, just. How far indeed any war is either just, or justifiable, we know not: happily we do know, that the one now ended has ended in our favour. Yet, besides the enormous load of debt with which it has encumbered the mother country, [(a share of which it is highly reasonable we should bear,)] and besides all that we suffered during its continuance, (the recollection of which must still be painful,) our joy must be not a little checked by the reflection, that we are still left exposed to many dangers, and subjected to many difficulties; which, though we may and do rejoice in a peace, afford us no ground of rejoicing that there has been a war.

Tempted by the imagery of my text, I cannot avoid here remarking, that, wherever war is spoken of by the sacred writers, it is generally considered as a curse, on account of the interruption it gives to the labours of the plow. Thus, in the prophet Joel, where the metaphor of the text is reversed, war is still viewed through the medium of its influence on husbandry. *Prepare war; make up the mighty men; let all the mighty men draw near; let them come up: beat your plow-shares into swords, and your pruning-hooks into spears.* And the calamitous effects of war on husbandry are thus pathetically described: *The field is wasted; the land mourneth, for the corn is wasted; the new wine is dried up, the oil languisheth.*

*Be ye ashamed, O ye husbandmen ! Howl, O ye vine-dressers, for the wheat and for the barley ! because the harvest of the field is perished. The seed is rotten under their clods, the garners are laid desolate, the barns are broken down, for the corn is withered. How do the beasts groan ! The herds of cattle are perplexed, because they have no pasture ; yea, the flocks of sheep are made desolate. War is the natural element of men of fierce and turbulent minds ; who, like some marine birds, which are never seen but in a storm, dwindle into insignificance in peace ; because they take no pleasure in rural quiet and domestic enjoyments. They are soldiers, and have to do with wars ; and, therefore, (to use the words, in the first book of Esdras, of one of the young men, who contended for truth before king Darius,) *they do not use husbandry* \*. When the posterity of Shimei settled themselves in Gedor, it is said, they found *fat pastures and good*. The reason follows : *the land was wide, and quiet, and peaceable*. God, in his Scriptures, every where speaks of war as one of the heaviest of his judgments, and the most calamitous punishment which sin can draw down on the sons of men. Accordingly, he*

\* In a book published in 1790, intitled, *Sketches of the Hindoos, &c.* there is a striking passage, perfectly analogous to this idea. "The Hindoos are the only cultivators of the land, and the only manufacturers. The Mahometans, who came into India, were soldiers, or followers of a camp ; and even now are never to be found employed in the labours of husbandry or the loom."—See Sketch iv. p. 89.

who alone can make the creature his weapon, to correct and to controul the refractory and the disobedient, threatened his people, when *they walked contrary to him*, and would not be reformed, to send a sword among them, and to bring their land into desolation. On the other hand, he held out the blessings which flow from agriculture to the obedient: thus speaking to the Israelites, *If ye will walk in my statutes, and keep my commandments to do them; then I will give you rain in due season, and the land shall yield her increase, and the trees of the field shall yield their fruit. And your threshing shall reach unto the vintage, and the vintage shall reach unto the sowing time: and ye shall eat your bread to the full, and dwell in your land safely. And I will give peace in the land; and ye shall lie down, and none shall make you afraid.*

Peace is welcome to us on ten thousand accounts: and I do most cordially congratulate you on the joyful occasion of the day. The ordinary occupations of life are now resumed; and your swarms of young men, heretofore so frequently taken from you to go to war, now return to the common hive, to make and to eat the honey of peace. If some have less glory all have more ease: and even those who have only the necessaries of life, now have them without peril. Those of our people who go down to the sea in ships and occupy their business in the deep waters now no longer are terrified by a double danger: if they fall it is into the hands of God; they no longer have violent men also to fear.



Bear with me, I pray you, if (owing, perhaps, to my partiality to agriculture, which I have long regarded as the most pleasing of all employments) I congratulate you chiefly on the welcomeness of peace from the leisure it will afford you to attend to husbandry. With every encouragement of a genial climate, and a fertile soil, it is our great shame, and greater misfortune, instead of being the foremost people on the Continent, to be the most backward : though it might have been expected, as we were the first province of North America which was firmly settled, that we should by this time have attained a superior degree of improvement. Yet, if it be any excuse for demerit to have to alledge that there are others as faulty as ourselves, we are not singular in having incurred this reproach. A kind of fatality seems to attend some countries. In every place, where nature has been unusually bountiful, there human industry is proportionably remiss. In the Southern parts of Europe, which are naturally some of the richest kingdoms in the world, the farmers, even in this age of general improvement, pursue the most wretched system of husbandry \*. Their inattention.

\* Spain, for instance, according to the accounts of a modern traveller, is most miserably cultivated.

"The husbandmen shovel up the stubble, weeds, and tops of furrows into small heaps, which they burn ; then spread them out upon the ground, and work them in with a plough, which is little better than a great knife fastened to a single stick, that just scratches the surface." — Swinburne's Travels through Spain, 8vo edit. vol. i. p. 110.

to the most valuable of the arts may, perhaps, be fairly ascribed to the badness of their respective governments.

But we have no such solid excuse to offer for our shameful neglect of agriculture. We not only dwell in a land of liberty but in a land abundantly stored with the gifts of nature. Like the most favoured people of God we have been brought into *a good land; a land of brooks of water, of fountains and depths that spring out of valleys and hills; a land of oil and honey; wherein we may eat bread without scarceness.* To describe Virginia the exactest geographer would be at a loss to find terms more apposite or just. Yet, so far from being distinguished by having made a suitable improvement of such rare natural advantages, I fear we are distinguished only by our indolent neglect of them. Were it not for the hope that, owing to many favourable circumstances now providentially thrown in your way, this extreme supineness will not continue to be characteristic of you, he would be far from deserving to be set down as your enemy, who, seeing the ill use ye make of the rich savannahs, and *pleasant places, in which the lines are fallen* to you, should wish you removed to the bleak and barren mountains of Acadia. There, necessity would force you to a conduct which neither a sense of duty nor a sense of interest have yet been able to excite. You would become industrious; and

by being industrious you would of course also become more worthy and more happy.

Indolence, it is probable, is every where the characteristic of the inhabitants of warm countries: I have felt its influence, and therefore have less reserve in owning that it is ours. As a proof of it permit me to mention, what I have often observed, that most of your inventions (in which, as far as mere natural talents go, no people are more ingenious) are calculated, not immediately to improve either arts or sciences, but merely to lessen labour.

But, however freely I may allow myself to censure you where you seem to deserve censure, it would be unjust not to allow, as I do with great pleasure, that, in many respects, you deserve praise. Your backwardness in husbandry is probably not altogether to be ascribed to your indolence. The marked preference so long shewn to commerce is a strong indication that agriculture has never been much favoured by the settlers of America. Far be it from me to suggest a sentiment, or to suffer an expression to escape me, that is disparaging to trade. Continue to pursue it with ardour; pursue it with success. When you were first planted here, it was, I believe, (at least in the intention of the settlers,) almost for the single purpose of trade. That you should be possessors of immense tracts of landed property, as well as a great trading people; that you should have, almost literally, an unbounded territory; and (in that respect at least)

resemble



resemble a great kingdom rather than a settlement of factors ; could hardly be in the contemplation of our founders. And, indeed, unless every thing else had been made to correspond and keep pace with this very essential change of colonial system, it is by no means certain that we have done well in departing from the original *plan of the plantation*. Be this as it may, I charge this general preference shewn to trade, so injurious to agriculture, to this leading principle of colonization ; which no subsequent change of circumstances has yet been able wholly to counteract.

It is high time that we should begin to adapt our conduct to our circumstances. By the fostering care of our parent-state, and by our own (oftentimes well-judged) co-operation, and, above all, by the blessing of Providence, we are become a considerable people. And whatever policy might be proper in the earlier periods of our settlement agriculture now claims our especial attention. [We have few inducements to become artisans or manufacturers : our having much land, and but few people, proves that we may employ ourselves to better purpose as farmers.] Besides, we can have manufactures from our fellow-subjects beyond the Atlantic better and cheaper than we can make them. But we have every inducement to follow the example of Uzziah, and to *love husbandry*. Every produce of the earth, from almost every spot on the globe, will, with due culture, thrive and flourish in Virginia. Besides *wheat and barley*, we possess,  
C 3 almost

almost exclusively, that wonderful plant\*, which I am at some loss how, with propriety, to call either a necessary of life or a luxury. A necessary it certainly is not, since it can neither be used as food or raiment; neither is it a luxury, at least in the sense of a gratification, being so nauseous and offensive, that long habit alone can reconcile any constitution to the use of it†. We also have not only the rich fruits of Persia and Asia Minor, but all the best plants and fruits of Europe; though, like the country from which we came, we can boast of but few indigenous productions. Our woods too are over-run with luxuriant vines and olives; a circumstance that shews with what certainty of great success they might be cultivated‡. Thus, if from the vicissitudes of men's fancies the use of tobacco should cease, you still possess a never-failing resource of plenty, in possessing *a land, like Palestine, of corn, and wine, and oil*: and it is not unworthy your observation, that, in the three articles just enumerated, most of the necessities, and most

\* Tobacco.

† Mr. Locke says, bread or tobacco may be neglected; but reason at first recommends their trial, and custom makes them pleasant.

‡ The prophetic strains of the immortal Maro might be no less realized in America than in Italy:—

“ Molli paulatim flavescet campus arista,

“ Incultisque rubens pendebit sentibus uva :

“ Et duræ quercus sudabunt roscida mella.”

Eclog. iv. l. 28.

of

of the luxuries of life are comprehended. *The principal things*, says the wise Son of Sirach, *for the whole use of man's life, are water, fire, iron, salt, flour of wheat, honey, milk, and the milk of the grape, and oil, and cloathing.* All these you do now actually possess, or soon may possess. And as by this happy termination of hostilities (blessed be God!) every man may now sit under his own vine, and under his own fig-tree, and securely cultivate and enjoy all the sweet arts of peace, ye are without excuse, if, hereafter, ye do not, like Noah, begin to be husbandmen, and to plant vineyards. Whilst you are duly grateful, as it highly becomes you to be, that *the lot is fallen to you in a fair ground, and that you have a goodly heritage*, forget not, I charge you, by what tenure you hold these great blessings; nor forget how easily (as well as certainly) God can and will *make a fruitful land barren, for the wickedness of them that dwell therein* \*.

Much

“ \* It was but a smal country, and a very littel plot of grownde,  
 “ which the Israelites possessed in the land of Canaan; which, as  
 “ now is a very barren country: for that within fifteen miles of  
 “ Jerusalem, the countrey is wholely barren, and ful of rockes and  
 “ stoney; and unles it be about the plaine of Jerico, I know not  
 “ anie parte of the countrey, at this presente, that is fruitfulle.  
 “ What it hath binne in tymes paste, I refer you to the declara-  
 “ tion thereof, made in the Holie Scriptures. My opinion is, that  
 “ when it was fruitfulle, and *a land that flowed with milk and honey*,  
 “ —in those dayes God blessed it, and that as then they followed his  
 “ commandements, but now, being inhabited by infidelles, that  
 “ prophane the name of Christ, and live in all beastly and filthy



Much has often been said, and much may still be said, in favour of husbandry: but its best recommendation is that it is favourable to happiness by being favourable to virtue\*. This circumstance is beautifully illustrated by the author of my text; a man whose mind was well stored with all the learning of his age, and stored, in particular, with a knowledge of husbandry. This will appear from the parable I am about to quote; a parable well worth the attention of the curious, if it were only for the account contained in it of Jewish agriculture. *Doth the plowman plow all day to sow; doth he open and break the clods of his ground? When he hath made plain the face thereof, doth he not cast abroad the fitches, and scatter the cummin; and cast in the principal wheat, and the appointed barley, and the rye in their place? For,*

“manner, God curseth it, and so it is made barren; for it is so barren, that I could get no bread, when I came nere unto it, &c.”—The Travayles of two Englyshe Pilgrimes to Jerusalem, Grand Cairo, Gaza, and Alexandria, &c. Printed for Thomas Archer in 1608.

\* “C’est dans l’agriculture principalement, que la France doit chercher les principaux moyens de subsistance pour son peuple. D’ailleurs, l’agriculture conserve les mœurs & la religion. Elle rend les mariages faciles, nécessaires & heureux: elle fait naître beaucoup d’enfans, &c.”—Etudes de la Nature, par B. de St. Pierre, Lond. edit. vol. i. p. 93.

See also Smith’s Wealth of Nations, 8vo edit. vol. i. p. 197. and vol. iii. p. 182. and The State of the Poor by Sir F. M. Eden, Bart. vol. i. p. 440 and p. 443.

*his God doth instruct him to discretion, and doth teach him. For, the fitches are not threshed with a threshing instrument, neither is a cart-wheel turned about upon the cummin : but the fitches are beaten out with a staff, and the cummin with a rod. Bread-corn is bruised, because he will not ever be threshing it, nor break it with the wheel of his cart, nor bruise it with his horsemen\*.* The doctrinal instruction, or moral, couched under this parabolical imagery, not only intimates that, in the words of the Son of Sirach, *the Most High hath*

\* In Virginia and Maryland, wheat, in general, is not thrashed, but trodden out with horses ; very much in the manner described in the following account of this ancient practice. “ They (the Europeans) do not thrash out their corn, but have it trodden out with oxen or horses ; nor in a barn, or covered place, but in the open air, on a floor ; which is made in the following manner. They take cow-dung, and a little straw ; and with water mix and work it together. When they have made a sufficient quantity of this loam, they spread it pretty thick, in a circle of about ten yards diameter, and turn horses upon it to tread it close down. Then they leave it to harden in the sun ; and in a few days it becomes as hard as a stone.

“ On the extremities of this floor they lay two rounds of sheaves, ears to ears ; and drive over them a team of eight horses or oxen, round and round, now and then turning the sheaves, till they judge the corn is all trodden out. This (Kolben adds) no doubt, will put the Scripture reader in mind of the custom of treading out corn by oxen among the children of Israel. But, for this purpose, I must needs prefer horses to oxen. It is most certain, that corn is much more expeditiously got out of the ears by the tread of horses and oxen, than by thrashing.”—Kolben’s *Cape of Good Hope* ; translated by Medley. Vol. ii. p. 73.

*created*

*created husbandry* \* ; but that the process in carrying on the work of grace, as well as the produce or fruit of grace, bears a near analogy and resemblance to the process of agriculture. The course of proceeding in both cases seems to be accurately marked in the passage now under consideration. The soil is first broken by the plough ; it is then harrowed ; then cleared of weeds ; and then sown. More precise or better directions could not be given for the culture of grace ; the growth of which is also *God's husbandry* ; wherein we are directed, first, to *break up the fallow grounds of our hearts* ; and then to *sow in righteousness*, that we may *reap in peace* †.

Some

\* “ *Prima Ceres ferro mortales vertere terram*

“ *Instituit.*”

Virg. Georg. lib. i. l. 147.

† Since this passage was written, I have noticed a similar comparison in Latymer's Sermons : he says,

“ I lyken preaching to a ploughman's labour, and a prelate to a  
 “ ploughman.—First, for their labour in all seasons of the yeare.  
 “ For there is no time of the yeare in which the ploughman hath not  
 “ some speciall worke to do : as in my countrey in Lestershire, the  
 “ plowman hath a time to set forth, and to assay his plough, and  
 “ other times, for other necessary workes to be done. And then  
 “ they also may be likened together for the diversitie of workes, and  
 “ varietie of offices that they have to do. For as the ploughman first  
 “ setteth forth his plough, and then tilleth his land, and breaketh  
 “ it in furrowes, and sometime ridgeth it up agayne, and at other  
 “ times harroweth it, and clotteth it, and sometime dongeth and  
 “ hedgeth it, diggeth it, and weedeth it, purgeth, and maketh it  
 “ cleane : so the prelate, the preacher——hath a busie worke—to  
 “ bring his flock to a right fayth, and then to confirme them in the  
 “ same



Some ancient, in drawing the picture of an happy people, says, it is necessary, peace and good laws should prevail; that *the ground should be well cultivated*; children well educated; and due homage paid to the Gods. And, among the Romans, to neglect the cultivation of one's farm was deemed a *probrum censorium*, a fault that merited the chastisement of the censor. No occupation, says Plutarch in his *Life of Numa*, implants so speedy and so effectual a love of peace as a country life. Accordingly, poets, who generally dwell with rapture on unsophisticated manners, speak of rural employments as comprehending all human virtue, and all human felicity. In every station and every sphere of life, men (if they be so disposed) may find cause to adore the wisdom and the goodness of God: but in none is it more conspicuous, or more striking, than in that occupation which requires us to be daily witnesses of the blessings of Providence so wonderfully manifested in *bringing forth grass for the cattle, and green herb for the service of man; wine to make glad the heart of man, oil to make him a chearful countenance, and bread to strengthen man's heart*. Blessed with health, the happy recompence of virtuous toil, with minds at ease, and un-

“same sayth. Now casting them downe with the law, and with  
 “threatninges of God for sinne. Now ridging them up agayne  
 “with the gospell and the promyses of God's favour. Now weeding  
 “them, by telling them their faultes, and making them forsake sinne.  
 “Now clotting them by breaking their stony harts, &c.”——  
 Latymer's Fourth Sermon—Of the plough.

agitated

agitated by all the mad contentions of a tumultuous world, farmers are generally contented to be quiet themselves, and to let others be quiet. And hence, the most virtuous and useful citizens are found neither in the highest nor lowest departments of society ; not among merchants and soldiers ; nor, perhaps, among artisans, whose modes of living render them too prone to run into juntos, clubs, and cabals ; but in the middle conditions of life, among an industrious, peaceable, and contented peasantry.

It is not without much undiffembled regret that I see a single cloud for a moment darkening our bright horizon. I should be happy to congratulate you on the peace being as complete, as, no doubt, our rulers expected it would be, when they proclaimed this day of thanksgiving. But, the news from our frontiers is still most alarming. Our savage neighbours, (who as savages alone are to be forgiven for delighting in war,) unsatiated with blood, have again taken up the hatchet, and are again spreading desolation in our borders. There is, I trust, little likelihood, that they will penetrate into the interior parts of the country. On the contrary, I hope my confidence is not ill-founded, that our young men, now gone out against them, (acquainted as they are with the Indian country and with Indian manners,) will, with little loss of blood, though certainly not without much toil and danger, soon over-awe them into peace.

Let me not be deemed enthusiastic, or romantic, when I avow that I expect much permanent good to arise

arise from this transient evil. Our rulers (both here and in Great Britain) will now have leisure to attend to every part of our American polity ; and, among other things, to the state of Indians : and, possessed of all the information which is now easily to be had, there can be no doubt, [they will adopt some plan effectually to civilize these nations of barbarians.]

If we may judge from any thing that has yet been attempted concerning them, they have been looked upon as untamed, and untameable monsters ; whom, like the devoted nations around Judea, it was a kind of religion with *white men*\* to exterminate. We have treated them with a rigour and severity equally unfuitable to the genius of our government, and the mild spirit of our religion. I hope, indeed, Britons have never yet so disgraced their national character as to have shewn towards them so much internecine fury as the Spaniards at first shewed towards the Aborigines of the Southern Continent. Yet, could the *poor Indian* be but his own historian ; and, from his own experience, and his own feelings, relate all that has happened since our arrival in America, it would appear (if I am not much mistaken) that he has not derived so much benefit, as we are apt to flatter ourselves, from being subjected to Britons, rather than to Spaniards.

\* I know not whether it may be thought of sufficient importance to remark that the North American Indians call Englishmen, but Englishmen only, WHITE MEN : Frenchmen they call Frenchmen ; and Spaniards, Spaniards. It shews, however, that, in things which engage their attention, they are nice and accurate observers.

I own



I own to you, I have not seldom blushed at their accounts of the treatment they have experienced from white men\*: but, I trust, the period is not far distant, when, for our own sakes, as well as for theirs, we

\* I hope to be pardoned for recording here an instance or two (from many which occur to me) of savage heroism and civilized barbarity. They were related to me on good authority; and, I believe, have never yet appeared in print.—“A gentleman in Maryland, well known for being the terror of Indians, having rambled into the woods with his son (then very young) espied an old Indian coming to his store (i. e. warehouse) to trade, as was usual in times of peace. The father, concealing himself and his boy behind a fallen tree, lay there, till the Indian, as far from suspecting any danger as he was from intending any mischief, got within reach of his gun. The boy was then directed to fire. He did so; and killed his man: for no reason whatever but that he might be able to say he had killed his man.” The person from whom I had this story, assured me it was related to him by one of the family as a meritorious fact.

“A party of white people, from one of the frontier settlements of Virginia, once went out against a body of Indians, who were in arms to oppose a small colony of settlers, who had taken possession of some lands, which the Indians alledged they had never sold. Indians remonstrate with their tomahawks; and therefore now declared war by driving off those whom they adjudged to be encroachers. The whites were not of a temper to be intimidated: they resolved, and were soon prepared, to attack the Indians, in their turns; who, being fallen upon when they were off their guard, and finding themselves likely to be overpowered, fairly took to their heels. Among them was a young squaw, with an infant in her arms. She was supposed to belong to a person of some note, from her dress being composed almost entirely of silk handkerchiefs. Checked in her speed by the burthen of her helpless charge, she hoped to escape by hiding herself and her child among the weeds of a marsh. The thought shewed she possessed great presence of mind; but, alas! it was of no avail.

The

we shall endeavour to diffuse political security and happiness to the Indian nations with whom we have any intercourse ; and to convert them into free men, useful subjects, and good Christians \*.

When

The chieftain of the whites (whose name I forbear to mention) espied her ; and took his aim. This she saw ; and being sensible also that she must fall, (for, when rifle-men have a fair shot, they are rarely known to miss their object,) her last and only care was, if possible, to preserve her babe. With this hope, she instantly turned it from her back to her breast ; that she alone might receive the ball. And even when she fell, by a kind instinct of nature (of the true force of which in such a case mothers only are, perhaps, the proper judges) she was anxious and careful so to fall as that her child might not be hurt.—I am shocked to relate, that both the mother and her babe were killed and scalped.”

The admirers of Grecian or Roman story are challenged to produce, from their classic stores, any instance in which the force of nature is more forcibly displayed, than it is in this Americo-tramontane anecdote. It has been remarked of two illustrious Romans, Lucretia and Cæsar, that they regarded the *το πρῶτον* even in the moment of death. Of the former Ovid says :

“Tunc quoque jam moriens, nè non procumbat honestè,

“Respicit: hæc etiam cura cadentis erat.”—Ovid. *Fasti*, lib. ii. l. 833.

The same thing is mentioned of Julius Cæsar.

These are strong instances of the force of habit ; whilst the ruling passion of the poor untutored Indian, in the same trying crisis, was the genuine dictate of nature. And, when it is considered, how many incidents of a similar nature must have occurred since our connexion with these Aboriginal nations, it is surprising that since the time of Capt. Smith (whose instructive and entertaining book is well worth reading, if it were only for the sake of the affecting story of Pocohontas) all such circumstances have failed to attract the attention of the writers of American history.

\* Then, in the strong language of a great moral writer, “when the woods of America shall have become pervious and safe, those  
“who

When charters were granted to the first emigrants, two motives only were assigned ; “ the enlargement of the Empire, and the farther propagation of Christianity\*.” The latter of these motives is not less just and proper now than it was then. Territory we do not want ; having, it is probable, already more than we well know how to manage. Instead therefore of countenancing that vagrant and unsettled way of life which has become habitual to so many of our people ; and that very general passion they have to be for ever running back in quest of fresh lands ; a practice not more unpropitious to all agricultural improvements, than likely to keep us involved in Indian wars ; let us *enlarge our empire* by the civilization of the Indians ; who already have a better title to any of our *un-located*† lands, than we can possibly give any new comers ; and who, with little pains, might soon be made at least as good subjects as those whom we are likely to put in their place.

It is granted, that every attempt hitherto made to bring this fierce and intractable people within the pale of social order has failed : but, happily, this does

“ who are now restrained by fear, shall be attracted by reverence ;  
 “ and multitudes who now range the woods for prey, and live at  
 “ the mercy of winds and seasons, shall, by the paternal care of  
 “ our Sovereign, the father of all his people, enjoy the plenty of  
 “ cultivated lands, the pleasures of society, the security of law, and  
 “ the light of revelation.”—Dr. Johnson in his Preface to Adams’s  
 Treatise on the Globes, 1767.

\* Maryland charter.

† An American term, denoting unoccupied lands.



not prove that therefore they are irreclaimable. The attempts hitherto made may have been made injudiciously; or they may not have been prosecuted and persevered in with sufficient earnestness. We found not these wretched tenants of the woods a whit more savage than our progenitors appeared to Julius Cæsar or Agricola. It is, moreover, well known, that in South America various wandering tribes of Indians, infinitely inferior both in bodily prowess and in the endowments of the mind to North American Indians, have been collected and incorporated into a well-governed community\*. Nay, the single influence of

\* “The customs and cruelties of many American tribes still disgrace human nature: but in Paraguay and Canada the natives have been brought to relish the blessings of society, and the arts of virtuous and civil life.” Mickle’s Introduction to his Translation of the *Lusiad*, p. 6.—Dumouriez, in his account of Portugal, (see English translation, p. 183), bestows high praise on this government of Paraguay, which was founded by the Jesuits. “At the end of fifty years, to the disgrace of the other colonies, the country of the missionaries was filled with villages, the Catholic faith was triumphant, and the savages civilized, happy, and subject to the wisest of governments.—— The power of these reverend fathers, by a system of politics very different from the greater part of human governments, was founded upon a perfect union of public utility with individual happiness.”

This wonderful republic at length excited the jealousy of the courts of Spain and Portugal; who, with hardly any pretence of justice, entered the country with arms in their hands, and, by the superior discipline of European soldiers, subjected to their yoke all who could not escape it by flight: “the rest established themselves further up the country, taking the fathers with them to console

of one single man among ourselves has well nigh effected, in one tribe, all that is wished for with respect to Indians in general; for, in comparison with other Indians, the Mohawks are even now a civilized people. But Sir William Johnson is another Peter the Great: and, by doing what he has done in this respect, he has furnished the world with a practical proof of an important observation made by a distinguished writer \*. “The strongest political institutions may be formed on the savage state of man. In this period the legislator hath few or no prior institutions to contend with; and therefore can form a system of legislation consist-

“them in their distress, and protesting against the tyranny and injustice of the barbarians of Europe.”

In a very sensible note (p. 187.) the translator remarks, that in France all their writers, except Dumouriez and some others who were of Montesquieu's opinion, inveighed bitterly against the republic of Paraguay. The humane philosophers, who are now preaching the freedom as well as the political liberty of the African slaves, with Voltaire at their head, could not bear that civilization, equality, and a government purely evangelical, should be introduced among the free Americans of Paraguay. This inconsistency of conduct (he says) it is not difficult to account for. The Jesuits, by their writings against these philosophers, defended the Christian religion; and the state founded by them was a Christian commonwealth. The black slaves, on the contrary, have no religion but their *Fetichism*, which is the worship of any living or inanimate being *ad libitum*; and which, therefore, no doubt, agrees better with modern philosophy and indefinite liberty than any religious system whatever.

\* Dr. Brown on Civil Liberty, &c. p. 55.

“ent with itself in all its parts: while the law-giver who reforms a state already modelled or corrupted must content himself with such partial regulations as the force of prior establishments and public habits will admit.”

What else is the early history of nations now the most polished, but the history of Indians? The brief character of uncultivated man is to *neglect agriculture*, to *practise hunting*, and to *delight in war* \*. From Nimrod down to Atakullakulla † hunters have been savage and bloody-minded. It would seem, then, that we have only to wean Indians from the chase, to tame them. Every other effort to mollify and humanize their stubborn spirits, without this preliminary requisite, will continue to be made to little purpose. They may *make talks* ‡; they may *give strings of wampum*; nay, they may even be baptized, and be called Christians: but as long as they live by hunting they will still be Indians. The putting an end to hunting is the first step in the progress of civilization. And if this single expedient should be found sufficient to remedy the many heavy evils arising from their

\* Such (we may recollect) were the Britons in ancient times: “Agriculturæ non student; vita omnis in venationibus atque in studiis rei militaris consistit.”—Cæsar. de Bell. Gall. lib. vi.

† A noted chieftain of the Cherokee nation, commonly called The Little Carpenter.

‡ A *talk* is an Indian term for a conference: and the *giving a string of wampum*, (which is a sort of girdle decorated with beads or shells,) is a pledge of their peaceable disposition.



being suffered to go on from age to age still in a savage state, it has the additional recommendation of being a simple one; a circumstance which, of itself, is no mean proof of its being a good scheme. If gunpowder and the implements of war were either not sold to them, or sold only at an exorbitant price, and little or nothing given them for their furs and their peltry; and if large and liberal bounties were granted for every thing they should raise or produce, either as farmers, shepherds, or manufacturers, it surely is fair to hope, that, as the first effects of such regulations would be the keeping of them at home, and gradually enuring them to the peaceful habits of pastoral and rural life, they would insensibly, like all the rest of the human race, when once they had learned a distinction of property, learn also, for the sake of their own, to abstain from that of others \*. As for the

\* ———“The first thing, therefore, that we are to draw these  
 “new men into, ought to be husbandry: first, because it is the  
 “most easie to be learned, needing only the labour of the body:  
 “next, because it is most general, and most needful: then, because  
 “it is most natural: and lastly, because it is most enemy to war,  
 “and most hateth unquietness, as the poet saith, ———bella  
 “execrata colonis: for, husbandry being the nurse of thrift, and  
 “the daughter of industry, detesteth all that may worke her scathe,  
 “and destroy the travaile of her handes, whose hope is all her lives  
 “comfort unto the plough: therefore are those kearne, stocages,  
 “and horse-boys to be driven and made to imploy that ableness of  
 “body, which they are wont to use to theft and villainy, henceforth  
 “to labour and industry.”——Spenser's View of the State of  
 Ireland, p. 253.

loss of trade in skins, which such a system might occasion, it is beneath a nation's notice. According to the common course of things, it must be lost in a very few years; as it is the trade, not of cultivated countries and civilized men, but of wildernesses and savages.

This proposed restriction from the blood of beasts is not only rational, but has, in some degree, the authority of revelation. Among other reasons that might be assigned for the prohibition to eat blood, this was not the least, that mankind might thus be checked and restrained from any propensity to harshness, inhumanity, and blood-thirstiness. The Jewish ritual abounds with such moral and benevolent inculcations.

Too much praise cannot be bestowed on those philanthropic and pious persons who have laboured to convert these poor pagans to the pure faith of the gospel. God forbid any thing here suggested should discourage such laudable charity! It is to be feared, however, that they have often, if not always, begun at the wrong end. With his hands perpetually imbrued in the blood of beasts and with appetites trained to thirst for human blood, taught from his earliest infancy to listen with rapture to songs of vindictive ferocity, can it be imagined that a savage will be persuaded to listen to the precepts of that religion which is to teach him *good-will towards men*? Seconded, however, and supported by the civil power, in some such manner as has just been intimated, the

services of the faithful missionary will not be less useful to government in effecting their civilization, and *turning the fierceness of man to the praise of God*, than the co-operation of government will be to the missionary: and I venture to pronounce, that it will be equally impolitic and impious ever to think of dissociating such services; for, “the inviting and “winning the nations of that country to the knowledge of the only true God and the Christian faith, “is the principal end of this plantation \*.”

But Indians are by no means the sole or chief objects of our present attention: the united motives of interest and humanity call on us to bestow some consideration on the case of those sad outcasts of society, our negro-slaves: for my heart would smite me, were I not, in this hour of prosperity, to entreat you (it being their unparalleled hard lot not to have the power of entreating for themselves) to permit them to participate in the general joy.

Even those who are the sufferers can hardly be sorry when they see wrong measures carrying their punishment along with them. Were an impartial and competent observer of the state of society in these middle colonies asked, whence it happens that Virginia and Maryland (which were the first planted, and which are superior to many colonies, and inferior to none, in point of natural advantage) are still so exceedingly behind most of the other British trans-

\* First New England charter.



Atlantic possessions in all those improvements which bring credit and consequence to a country?—he would answer—They are so, because they are cultivated by slaves. I believe it is capable of demonstration that, except the immediate interest which every man has in the property of his slaves, it would be for every man's interest that there were no slaves: and for this plain reason, because the free labour of a free man, who is regularly hired and paid for the work which he does, and only for what he does, is, in the end, cheaper than the extorted eye-service of a slave. Some loss and inconvenience would, no doubt, arise from the general abolition of slavery in these colonies: but were it done gradually, with judgement, and with good temper, I have never yet seen it satisfactorily proved that such inconvenience would either be great or lasting. North American or West Indian planters might, possibly, for a few years, make less tobacco, or less rice, or less sugar; the raising of which might also cost them more; but, that disadvantage would probably soon be amply compensated to them by an advanced price, or (what is the same thing) by the reduced expence of cultivation.

With all my abhorrence of slavery, I feel in myself no disposition to question either its lawfulness, or its humanity. Its lawfulness has again and again been clearly proved: and if it is sometimes cruel it is so only from being abused. But, if I am not much mistaken, more harm than good has been done by

some late publications on the subject of slavery \* ; a subject which, of all others, seems to be the least proper for a mere rhetorician. Thus much, however, I may be permitted to observe, that, in no other country was slavery so well regulated as it is in the British colonies. In some respects I hope it is on a better footing than it ever was, or is, any where else : but it is surely worse in this, that here, in one sense, it never can end. An African slave, even when made free, supposing him to be possessed even of talents and of virtue, can never, in these colonies, be quite on terms of equality with a free white man. Nature has placed insuperable barriers in his way. This is a circumstance of great moment ; though, I think, it has not often been adverted to by popular writers †.

If ever these colonies, now filled with slaves, be improved to their utmost capacity, an essential part of the improvement must be the abolition of slavery. Such a change would hardly be more to the advan-

\* In the Virginia News-papers. By Mr. Arthur Lee.

† A convict, when purified by long service, and become industrious and honest, naturally coalesces with the people around him, and his former delinquencies and infamy are forgotten ; his children can never be upbraided with their having had a felon for their father : whereas the descendants of a white person, married to a black one, would, for many generations, by their complexion, proclaim their origin. Accordingly, though many mulattoes and people of colour have obtained wealth, I remember no instance, in any European colony, of their having obtained rank.

tage of the slaves, than it would be to their owners. An ingenious French writer \* well observes, that “ the state of slavery is, in it’s own nature, bad : it is “ neither useful to the master, nor to the slave. Not “ to the slave, because he can do nothing through a “ motive of virtue † ; not to the master, because, by “ having an *unlimited* authority over his slaves ‡, he “ insensibly accustoms himself to the want of all “ moral virtues, and from thence grows fierce, hasty, “ severe, voluptuous, and cruel.”

I do you no more than justice in bearing witness, that in no part of the world were slaves ever better

\* Montesquieu. Spirit of Laws, book xv. chap. i.

† Surely the position that slaves have no motive to be virtuous, is here laid down somewhat too strongly : there are virtues growing out of slavery, and peculiar to it, as there are in every other condition of life ; such as attachment, fidelity, meekness, and humility, which are the chief Christian virtues ; and slavery is to be objected to, not so much from it’s tendency to debase and injure slaves, (though I am sensible it does this in a considerable degree,) as from it’s being injurious to society at large. See some just observations on this point by Sir Frederic Morton Eden, Bart. in “ The State of the Poor,” vol. i. p. 11.

‡ That *unlimited authority over slaves* is unfavourable to moral virtue in the master, I readily admit ; but in no European colony has any such authority ever been exercised. It is, however, remarkable, that the great champion of liberty, and advocate of humanity, Mr. Locke, by the 10th article, or item, of the Constitution which he drew up for the government of Carolina, gives “ every freeman of Carolina absolute power and property over his “ slaves, of what opinion or religion soever.

treated



treated than, in general, they are in these colonies. That there are exceptions, needs not to be concealed : in all countries there are bad men. And shame be to those men who, though themselves blessed with freedom, have minds less liberal than the poor creatures over whom they so meanly tyrannize ! Even your humanity, however, falls short of their exigencies. In one essential point, I fear, we are all deficient : they are nowhere sufficiently instructed. I am far from recommending it to you, at once to set them all free ; because to do so would be an heavy loss to you, and probably no gain to them ; but I do entreat you to make them some amends for the drudgery of their bodies by cultivating their minds. ] By such means only can we hope to fulfil the ends, which, we may be permitted to believe, Providence had in view in suffering them to be brought among us. You may unfetter them from *the chains of ignorance* ; you may emancipate them from *the bondage of sin*, the worst slavery to which they can be subjected : and by thus *setting at liberty those that are bruised*, though they still continue to be your slaves, they shall be *delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God*.

I come now, in the last place, to exhort you not to disappoint the pious wishes which our pious king had in thus publicly summoning us to hail *the Lord of lords and King of kings with songs of deliverance*, for having *given his people the blessing of peace*. That a long and bloody war, unparalleled in all former histories

tories either for the variety of its operations, or the universality of its extent, is at length happily terminated, cannot but fill every benevolent heart with joy; even though men with such hearts were no otherwise interested than as they take part in the general interests of humanity. But, besides that near interest which we cannot fail to feel in whatever materially concerns our mother country, on whom the chief burden of this general war has fallen; we must not forget, [that *for us and for our sakes* it was first entered into;] and that our welfare has been principally consulted in the terms on which it has been concluded. And, notwithstanding all that a discontented party has said, or has written, on the idea that the conditions of the peace are inadequate to our great success, so far as they concern us we can have nothing to object to them. Our particular interests, indeed, have been so much attended to, that the happy situation in which we are now placed has actually excited no little dissatisfaction among those who have long looked upon us with suspicion and jealousy: and our friends are told that the day may not be distant when even they shall sorely rue that so much has been done for the continental colonists. Away with all such sinister surmises! I join with you in resenting them, as equally ungenerous and unjust. Your regard to your own interests, your sense of duty, your feelings of gratitude, will all conspire to give the lie to these ill-omen'd prognostications.

Instead of dwelling, as we are too apt to do, with a perverse kind of gratification, on these now prevalent topics of discussion (which, like ephemeral insects, buzz around us awhile with a busy kind of importance, and then are heard of no more), call to mind, I pray you, what your *searchings of heart* were, when, not long since, on the defeat of General Braddock, you saw (at least in your panic-struck imaginations you saw) your enemies at your very doors, ready to *swallow you up*; when not only a solitary individual or two, but the whole land, with fasting and with prayer exclaimed: *Oh, thou sword of the Lord! how long will it be ere thou be quiet? Put up thyself into the scabbard; rest and be still!* Let the strength of your fears, and the ardour of your wishes at that time for a peace on almost any terms, be some measure for your joy and thankfulness now; when you have obtained such a peace as, I believe, exceeded your most sanguine expectations on the commencement of the war. And whatever praises we bestow either on those who directed the war, or who negotiated the peace; still the glory of all belongs unto God. He it was who inspired our statesmen with wisdom; and who covered the heads of our warriors in the day of battle. He it was who *turned the counsels of our enemies into foolishness*; and who, in his mercy, has *lifted us up on high above them that rose up against us*. *God hath indeed done marvellous things for us; whereof we rejoice.*

But still, great as is the present occasion of our joy, it must depend on ourselves, whether peace, however  
desirable



desirable at this moment, shall continue to be a blessing to us; or shall finally add to our condemnation. War is the just judgement which God inflicts on a sinful people. Had we not deserved it, so grievous a visitation would not have been our lot. But as peace has now once more been restored to us, let us humbly hope that we are become not altogether unworthy of so great a blessing. Let us, now that we are *made whole*, endeavour to *sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto us*. Let us again turn our attention to cultivate the arts of peace, the only arts which, as Christians, we ought to be very solicitous to know; and so let us regulate our words and actions, so let us conduct ourselves towards God and our neighbours, that we may *lead quiet and peaceable lives in all godliness and honesty*.

“ Grant, we beseech thee, O Lord, that the course  
“ of this world may be so peaceably ordered by thy  
“ governance, that thy Church may joyfully serve  
“ thee, in all godly quietness, through Jesus Christ  
“ our Lord!”

## DISCOURSE II.

## ON SCHISMS AND SECTS\*.

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JUDGES, ch. xvii. ver. 5, 6.

*And the man Micah had an house of gods, and made an ephod and teraphim, and consecrated one of his sons, who became his priest. In those days there was no king in Israel, but every man did what was right in his own eyes.*

**T**O give you a proper view of this text, it will be necessary to enter somewhat at large into it's history.

The sacred writer, having now completed the story of Sampson, which he seems to have been unwilling to interrupt with any digressions, sets himself, in this and the remaining chapters of this book, to record

\* Preached in 1769, first, in two Forest Parishes of Caroline and Spotsylvania: afterwards, with necessary alterations, at different times in different places both of Virginia and Maryland; and once (not in any church, but *sub dio*) in the Back Woods, near the Blue Ridge; a country which seemed to bear no faint resemblance to Ephraim; and which, like it, was over-run with sectaries.

some other memorable events in the Jewish history, which happened in the times of the Judges. The chapter before us relates in what manner idolatry gained a footing in the tribe of Ephraim, through the misconduct of Micah, who is supposed to have been an Ephraimite.

Of Micah we know nothing more than what is related in this and the following chapter. From these we learn, that, having either been really straitened for want of room in the more cultivated parts of the country, or imagining that he was, he had removed and settled in the mountainous parts of Ephraim. There he dwelt with his mother, who was probably a widow; and certainly a very superstitious woman.

It is not very easy to understand what is precisely meant in the account of the *eleven hundred shekels*, here said to have been *taken from* this woman, and about which she *curst*; and which, it afterwards appears, her son Micah took. Commentators are exceedingly divided in their conjectures concerning this difficult text. The most general and most probable opinion is, that, being inclined to innovations in religion, she had set apart, and devoted to some religious purpose, the sum here mentioned; and that she had bound herself by an oath (here called *curfing*, an oath being a conditional curse, or execration) to do this. It is in this manner she herself explains the word, when she says that she had *wholly dedicated this silver unto the Lord*. Her son, who was deeply tinctured



tinctured with the same perverted principles on the subject of religion, availed himself also of the circumstances of the times, which left him at liberty to do whatever was *right in his own eyes*. Accordingly, being apprised of his mother's intentions by her having *spoken of it in his ears*, he resolved, (for some reason or other which does not appear,) to anticipate her purpose, and to employ her money in the same manner as she herself had proposed. With this view he surreptitiously *took the eleven hundred shekels*; and having done so, immediately avowed it to his mother. She instantly saw and admitted the force of his plea; and, with great consistency, no longer blamed him. It would, indeed, have ill become her, who herself had shewn so little deference to the old established institutions of her country, to have quarrelled with her son for having followed her example; and for having regulated his conduct (not by any established precedents or rules, but) by his own hasty and crude ideas of propriety. Thus reconciled, they very amicably united in an unhallowed plan to employ a *founder*, to make them *a graven image, and a molten image*.

We cannot be surpris'd to find, that Micah, having gone thus far, soon fell into greater irregularities; and that he *had an house of gods, and made him an ephod and teraphim; and consecrated one of his sons, who became his priest*. The phrase, which is translated *house of gods*, is, in the original, undoubtedly plural: yet it is often rendered in the singular; and

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I apprehend, may here signify an *house of God*; that is, a *Beth-el*, or place of worship of his own; distinct and separate from that of *Shiloh*, to which it was his, and every man's, duty to have resorted. This interpretation (which it becomes me to apprize you, though approved of by many, is yet not that which is most commonly received) is not a little confirmed by other texts and passages of Scripture, not usually adduced to support it. In the twelfth chapter of Deuteronomy, God, after expressly directing the people to *destroy all the places* wherein the *nations* around them *served their gods upon the high mountains, and upon the hills, and under every green tree*, (places very exactly corresponding with that where Micah had built his *house of God*,) no less peremptorily ordered them not to do *whatsoever was right in their own eyes*. From the manner in which this last part of the injunction is connected with that which preceded it, there seems to be good reason to infer, that the phrase, *doing whatsoever was right in their own eyes*, meant that particular offence, (which is so often mentioned in the history of the Jews, and to which they are known to have been so remarkably liable,) the falling off, either wholly or in part, to the idolatries of the Gentiles.

Micah's apostacy from the established worship does not appear to have proceeded from enmity to religion. Like defections in general from rectitude to error, and from virtue to vice, it was gradual. The

*ephod*\* he made was a proper sacerdotal garment ; appropriated solely to the tabernacle, and to the use of the high priest. But (to use the words of a well-known commentator †) “ whatsoever resemblance “ this ephod had, in its shape and form, to the ephod “ of the high priest, it had none of that rich work in “ it, which the high priest’s ephod had ; neither a “ girdle, nor a breast-plate belonging to it : being “ no more such a garment as that golden ephod, “ than his Levite was a priest, or his teraphim an “ urim and thummim.”

The interpretation also of the word *teraphim* is no less dubious and difficult ; as it is used, in Scripture, in a good as well as in a bad sense. Priests, and, in certain cases, even representative images, were ceremonial appendages prescribed by the Jewish ritual in the worship of the true God ; and common also in the worship of false gods. But Micah was clearly a schismatic : in transferring to the worship of false gods those *teraphim* which had been appropriated to the worship of the true God, he worshipped him in a way contrary to his own appointment ; or, in other words, worshipped him falsely. The whole story proves, that his aim was to blend together the worship of the true God and that of idols. And, therefore, as the *ephod* and the *Levite* (who is afterwards spoken

\* . . . . “ per ephod, velut præcipuam sacerdotalem vestem, “ omnes cæteræ significantur.”——Cornelius à lapide.

† Bp. Patrick.



of) were necessary and proper in the worship of the one, so *the graven and the molten images and the teraphim* were, if not proper, yet not uncommon, in the worship of the other. This deviation also, like the others, was so contrived that (though grossly erroneous,) it yet still bore the semblance of truth. For, though *teraphim*\* were undoubtedly too often used as heathen idols, and certainly so intended in the instance before us, yet it is probable that Micah hoped by them to have all the benefit of the urim and thummim, and even of the *cherubbinical voice* itself; which belonged to, and always accompanied, the established priesthood.

Another innovation, which Micah introduced, was the *consecrating one of his sons, who became his priest*. In the Hebrew it is,—*He filled the hand of one of his sons*; that is, he put sacrifices into his hands, to be offered unto God: which was the rite always used in the initiation of priests†. In doing this, he also departed from the form of worship prescribed by divine authority. For this son (even if he was the eldest) was not of Aaron's lineage nor tribe; in whom alone the functions of the priesthood were vested. Afterwards, indeed, (for the greater solemnity, and in

\* “ Erant ergo theraphim idola domestica, quæ domi colebant, & quasi oracula consulebant de rebus arcanis vel futuris, quos Romani deos penates & lares appellabant.”——Cornelius à lapide.

“ They were representative images of the object of religious awe and veneration.”——Parkhurst's Hebrew Lexicon.

† See Exodus xxix. 24. and Levit. viii. 27.

conformity, as it were, to the establishment,) he did admit and employ a Levite, who, however, performed the duties of his holy calling very irregularly.

The history fully accounts for these irregularities : *in those days there was no king in Israel.* There is some diversity of opinion as to the chronology of this event : but it is generally supposed to have happened between the death of those elders who survived Joshua, and the first oppression of Israel by Cushan ; when the *children of Israel forsook the Lord, and did evil in his sight*, that is, when they fell into idolatry. This was before the time of the judges ; who had indeed, occasionally, the name of *king*, but never the power : and therefore were not, in all cases, equal to the correction of abuses, or the suppression of idolatry.

The Jewish government was a theocracy ; and the supreme authority was vested in the high priest. Judges over all the tribes, however, were occasionally raised up by God ; and principally to lead them to war. To each tribe there was a civil magistrate called a *ruler*, who, as well as the judges, was subordinate to the high priest, the immediate representative of God. When the people would not obey this mild system of government, nor hearken to the voice of the Lord their king, but *corrupted themselves*, and degenerated into the idolatries of the nations around them, the Lord delivered them into the hands of their enemies ; and they that hated them were *lords over them* ; until, by *crying unto the Lord in their trouble*, they

they obtained judges, who went before them, and rescued them from their enemies.

Some such general relaxation of principle (their proneness to disobedience being notorious) seems to have prevailed among them at the period of the history now under consideration. It was one of those periods, in which (according to the phraseology of Scripture) *there was no king in Israel*; that is, no good government. No wonder that the people, thus usurping the power into their own hands, soon became licentious, *self-willed*, and *despisers of dominion*; and that, like the new settlers of Laish, *they lived careless, and after the manner of the Zidonians. There was no magistrate in the land, to put them to shame in any thing.*

As some excuse for Micah, it may perhaps be allowed, that the Ephraimites, among whom he dwelt, were an envious, aspiring, and turbulent people. This appears from their sharp expostulation with Gideon in the eighth chapter of the book of Judges; and from the character given of them by Isaiah \*. That such a people should hanker after innovations, is perfectly consistent: and therefore it is not unnatural to suppose, that they might lead Micah to these changes, rather than wait to be led by him. It might also be urged in his behalf, that Gideon himself, (a man of eminent character, and one of their judges), had set him the example, by actually *making an ephod, and putting it in his city, even in Ophrah*. It is one

\* Chap. xl. ver. 13.



of the greatest aggravations of wrong conduct in distinguished men that it's evil consequences are not confined to themselves : many are seduced by their example. Gideon, by the general tenor of his life, shewed that *the Spirit of the Lord was indeed with him* : yet, like other saints and servants of God, being still a man, he had many human infirmities. It is not to be denied, that, in the instance before us, he sinned greatly. Instead of discouraging the people, already too prone to idolatry, he himself was the foremost to offend. Seduced, it would seem, by the allurements of popular applause, he gratified the unreasonable humours of the people in affording them an opportunity of performing divine worship in their own city, rather than going to *Shiloh*, where alone they were commanded to worship.

But neither the waywardness of the people, the infirmity of Gideon, nor any other peculiarity of temptation, can wholly excuse either Micah, or his mother, for thus setting up a new mode of worship different from what God had established. In making *graven and molten images* he palpably adopted a false religion : but as to the *ephod*, the *altar*, the *Levite*, and whatever else bore any resemblance to the religion of the tabernacle, he was blameable only for intermeddling with religious matters in a way contrary to the declared will of God ; and for introducing a separate house, a separate priest, and, in short, a separate religion from that of his country.

The serious and very interesting inference to be drawn

drawn from this story is, that though men may profess the same doctrines, and even use the same worship with the true church of God, still they may not, in the language of theology, be members of that church. From no passage does it appear that Micah was either indifferent or careless about religion : in the part he took he might be sincere ; nay, it is even possible, he might flatter himself he was a reformer, and *more righteous than others*. He continued to reverence the laws, to offer the same sacrifices, and to use the same sacraments that he had always done : but he introduced innovations for which he had no authority ; he led the way to a schism and a separation, which were injurious both to true religion, and to the peace and comfort of his countrymen ; and therefore were positively forbidden. In those respects, it is clear, he was guilty of an heinous sin ; even of as heinous a sin as the sin of Jeroboam, of whom so much censure is frequently expressed in the Scriptures. For, though Jeroboam perhaps was guilty of heresy as well as of schism, yet the charge most generally brought against him is, that he set up altars, erected temples, and fixed symbols of God's presence in a place different from that in which God had chosen to fix his name. He burned incense, and offered sacrifices upon such altars as God had not appointed ; and he consecrated persons to minister at those altars, who were not of God's institution.

Somewhat similar to this was the case of the Samaritans. In all the great essentials of religion they

agreed with the Jews. But our Saviour in vain declared, *in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship*: that was the place fixed on for the centre of unity in worship, and thither were the tribes to go up, to testify that they were all of one communion, and to *give thanks with one mouth, and one heart, unto the name of the Lord*. From this *temple of the Lord* the Samaritans had separated themselves, and set up distinct altars and places of worship of their own. This defection constituted their crime: and this is the true definition and criterion of a sinful schism, that it is a needless separation from a church, which has all the requisites and characteristics of a true church. Such a church was that of the Jews, with which our Saviour did actually hold communion, though the Samaritans would not. And, no doubt, it was on this principle, and for this reason, that he would not admit that the Samaritans were within the pale of the church; for he told the woman of Samaria, in express terms, that *salvation was of the Jews*. And when, in his way through Galilee and Samaria, he once cured a Samaritan leper, he called him a *stranger*; by which term, as is well known, our blessed Lord meant only to intimate, that this Samaritan had no share in the peculiar covenant and promise made to Israel.

This spirit of division and separation, which has always been so unfavourable to true religion and the peace of the world, long prevailed in, and distracted, Judea; as it has distracted every other country in  
which



which it has existed. As soon as the two principal sects (the Pharisees and the Sadducees) arose among them, all peace and harmony were destroyed by their disputes. Both parties, eager to advance themselves by depressing others, courted the favour of their rulers, in order to make use of their authority to crush their adversaries; and sometimes the one was uppermost, and sometimes the other. We are informed by the Jewish historians, that Hircan, gained over by the Sadducees, persecuted the Pharisees without mercy. He made it a capital crime to follow their institutions: some of them he imprisoned; others he put to death; and the greatest part he forced to take refuge in deserts. His son, Aristobulus, acted the same part; and so did Alexander his brother. His widow, however, influenced by his advice, espoused the opposite cause. And now the Pharisees, having uncontrolled authority, persecuted the Sadducees no less than they had been persecuted; and returned *evil for evil* in ample measure. In short, these sectaries never ceased to persecute each other, till they ceased to exist: and their animosities were perpetuated even until the total ruin of the nation, which they accelerated. No length of time, no intenseness of suffering, allayed their hatred: even war did not unite them. They chose rather to be destroyed by their divisions than to save their country by unanimously opposing its enemies.

The Jews, however, are known and acknowledged to have been a religious, a thinking, and a studious people:

people: and, however extraordinary the assertion may seem, I conceive it to be capable of proof, that it is among such a people chiefly that sectarianism is most likely first to take root, and then to get the fastest hold. It is therefore not a little difficult to account for the present propensity of the people of this colony to run into sects. [For, I conceive it to be neither a satire nor a slander, but merely the declaring a plain and obvious matter of fact, to say of the present age in general, that if it be (as we are fond to boast it is) enlightened, it certainly is not a learned age; and that the people of these countries, in particular, do not deserve to be characterised as a religious, a thinking, a reading, or a studious people.] Unwilling or unable either to think or to read deeply our age has the merit of having found a most palatable substitute in, what is called, light reading; and there are no subjects to which the principle is not now applied; none which are not treated in a way intended to be amusing and agreeable rather than instructive\*. In such times, and among such a people,

\* It was characteristical of the people of that part of America where this sermon was written, and when it was delivered, that, differing from people in the same spheres of life in other countries, every man who could read, read chiefly such publications as were filled with sneers at orthodoxy, cavils against the national church, and (above all) with incessant lavish encomiums on an uncontrolled freedom of enquiry. Far be it from any wise or good man, in any respect, to disparage principles of such indisputable truth and excellence as the right of private judgment and the freedom of enquiry;

people, it is no wonder that mere sciologists should be preferred to sound scholars ; and that the hasty productions of superficial smatterers should be read and admired, whilst the deep researches and the close reasoning of better writers are unpopular and neglected. One who knew them well thus accurately describes them : “ There is a sort of men, who cannot distinguish between liberty and licentiousness ; who endeavour to make themselves famous by eternal disputing, and calling every thing in question ; who will never acknowledge themselves convinced, though the superior and prevailing evidence is against them. They do indeed pretend to *examine all things* ; but then they *hold fast* nothing ; no not even *that which is good*. Their whole study is to unhinge men’s minds, and root out their religious principles, without giving them something as good in their stead. These persons pretend to freedom of thought, and unbiassed enquiry ; but they are

quity : it is to be lamented only, that such exclusive preference of such principles renders them particularly liable to lead to great and dangerous abuses ; and I am uncharitable enough to suspect that the principles in question have, of late, been thus violently brought into vogue, only because they are liable to be so abused. What advantage the world has received from the diligent dissemination of such writings, my station in it has perhaps been too low and obscure to have enabled me to discover : but I have long seen (or think that I have seen) how much they have contributed not only to lessen men’s reverence for government, but by the same means, (most decidedly, though indirectly,) to encourage sects and parties.

“ generally



“generally half-thinkers and bigots ; or persons who  
 “determine without evidence, or a cool, sincere, and  
 “thorough examination \*.”

It is thus that so general a dissatisfaction with the existing government both in church and state hath at length been excited among you. The policy by which this has been effected is equally deep and dangerous. It is now well known that James the Second published his celebrated declaration for liberty of conscience more to promote the interests of Popery than from any real regard to tender consciences. Just so, the fashionable writers of our day are the unwearied advocates of toleration, not from any real principle of universal charity, but, as is much to be feared, with a latent view of serving the causes of deism and revolution †. For who are greater bigots, or more intolerant towards all who differ from them, than infidels ; or [who so tyrannical as republicans possessed of power ?] Yet these are the men who, by their perseverance, have at length unsettled the minds of our

\* Dr. George Benson ; in his Sermons, p. 132.

† It is remarkable, that Edwards (himself a Presbyterian) in his instructive and valuable book, “The Gangræna,” attributes those monstrous swarms of sectaries with which, during the civil wars in the last century, the kingdom was over-run, not solely (as other writers do) to the unexampled rage and spite which were then excited against the church of England but to the prevalence of loose and licentious writings in favour of a general toleration. Nor is it less worthy of remark that the first step which Julian took to restore Paganism was his famous decree of Universal Toleration.

people ;

people ; and led them, step by step, to lukewarmness in religion ; to scepticism ; to separation and schism ; and even to downright infidelity.

Having thus pointed out to you, with not more freedom than the case requires, and certainly with all the fidelity of which I am capable, some of those peculiar causes which (in addition to the general ones which affect us in common with all the rest of the Christian world) seem to me to have led to the great growth of sects and sectarists, which now unhappily distinguishes this part of the country, I proceed to consider what, in consequence of it, appears to me to be our duty, as we are, and as we are not, separatists.

It was for the express purpose of having this matter calmly, but fully, considered, that you now hear one more stranger preaching in your neighbourhood. I see some who (I know) *have great searchings of heart because of these divisions* ; who are duly sensible of the importance of the true faith, and of the danger of false religion ; and who, therefore, will cordially join me in praying, that it may please God, of his mercy, to grant, that by any thing they can do, or by any thing I can say, those of our brethren who have now, as we think, *erred and strayed*, may *return into the way of righteousness* ; *eschew those things that are contrary to their profession, and follow all such things as are agreeable to the same !*

As for the unstable and the wavering (and even avowed) separatists, permit me to entreat them to be so just to themselves, and so indulgent to me, as to  
listen

listen to my discourse with patience, and, if possible, without prejudice. I come to convince them (if I can) that it is equally their interest and their duty to *abide stedfast and unmoveable in the faith once delivered to the saints*: I come to persuade and exhort, but by no means to *compel* them to continue in our communion. And so far am I from being of a temper to exasperate those among you who are modest, ingenuous, and *teachable*, by any sharp or harsh reprehensions, that though I neither can, nor will, *use flattering words*, yet, *God is my witness, how, being affectionately desirous of you, I wish to exhort, to comfort, and to charge every one of you, even as a father doth his children* \*. *As a shepherd seeketh out his flock in the day that he is among his sheep that are scattered, so will I seek out my sheep: I will seek that which was lost, and bring again that which was driven away; and will bind up that which was broken, and will strengthen that which was sick* †.

To err is, alas! the general lot of our fallen nature: nor are we, I fear, ever more likely to be wrong than when we are unusually confident that we are right. But, because error is thus inseparable from our nature, it is not, therefore, of so slight moment as that we are not answerable for it: always our misfortune, it is oftentimes our fault. Nor, because confidence is so unbecoming, is it therefore our duty to be sceptical, wavering, and unsteady in our opinions. Fickleness

\* 1 Thess. ii. 1.      † Ezek. xxxiv. 12.



and unsteadiness of faith are almost as blameable as infidelity : and the relinquishment of old opinions, or the adoption of new ones, without sufficient examination and evidence, are equally proofs of weak minds, and equally criminal. Errors in opinion are but a little (if they are at all) more venial than errors in practice : for speculative and practical errors are so nearly connected that it is very uncommon to meet with the one without the other. In subjects of importance, then, and especially in matters of religion, it is particularly incumbent on every man often and carefully to *examine and prove himself whether he be in the faith* : for, if he be in error, it will be no excuse to him that he erred ignorantly ; inasmuch as ignorance, when the means of information are abundant and ample, is almost always wilful and obstinate. To adopt new opinions without a thorough conviction of their being well founded,\* or to retain opinions when thus hastily adopted, through indifference to what is right, is a crime imputable not to any weakness of understanding, but to the perverseness of the will. Let it not, therefore, be thought either bold or harsh in me to assert, that such a wilful error in faith is not less fatal and damnable than a wilful wickedness of life.

We all profess to love truth ; and, of course, to wish that it may generally prevail : and there is no reason to question our sincerity in this profession. Hence the general solicitude to make proselytes : but, as truth is simple and uniform, it is impossible, when differ-

differences prevail, that we can all be in the right. And though it would be the height of arrogance in any man, or in any body of men, to boast presumptuously, that they only have found the truth, and all others are in error; yet, by one line of conduct, and by one only, we may all of us be so far in the right, even when we miss of the truth, as to be guilty of no damnable error. This line of conduct is, what Scripture calls, *all holding the same faith*: an expression which by no means imports, that we are all bound, on pain of damnation, to think exactly alike even in points of faith. However much it is our duty, however desirable it may be that we should so agree, yet, considering the nature of the human mind, such an event is rather to be wished than expected. The God of all mercy does not require of his creatures more than he has enabled them to perform: and therefore, when a conformity in religion is required of us, it must be understood to be required only *as far as it is possible*\*. God is true, though all men should be liars; and his Scriptures are still invariably true, even when men most misinterpret them. These *lively oracles*, totally dissimilar to the mystic responses of Delphi, do not give ambiguous or equivocal an-

\* "It is a matter of faith to believe, that the sense of them (viz. of obscure places of Scripture, which contain matters of faith) whatever it is, which was intended by God, is true; for, he that doth not so, calls God's truth in question. But, to believe this or that to be the true sense of them, or to believe the true sense of them and to avoid the false, is not necessary either to faith or salvation."—Chillingworth, part i. cap. ii. p. 90.

swers. Whatever be the case with its professors, our religion is not at variance with itself: its doctrines, like their blessed author, are *the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever*. And when men, who appear to be equally intelligent and equally conscientious, are induced (as, alas, they often are!) to draw a different conclusion from the same premises, if it does not impugn the truth of God, it should not divide Christians from Christians. If, like the Apostles and primitive Christians, we resolve to *hold all the same faith*, we must also resolve, with them, to continue united in *doctrine and in fellowship*; *all speaking the same truth*, and all taking due care that there be *no divisions among us*.

We have all but *one Lord, one faith, and one hope of our calling*: we are all the spiritual children of the same heavenly Father; redeemed by the same precious blood of Christ; sanctified by the same gracious Spirit; members of the same body, and joint-heirs of the same inheritance in the world to come: and therefore we are all under the same bounden duty to *walk by the same rule*, and to *mind the same things*, and to *be knit together in one communion and fellowship*.

Whilst, however, we permit ourselves thus humbly to hope that unavoidable differences of opinion on subjects that relate to religion may be overlooked or forgiven, let us not rashly run into a contrary extreme, and imagine, that if we be but sincere it is of little moment what we believe. Many favourable circumstances must concur to render any error innocent;



and much does it concern us all to reflect, whether that error, which alienates, divides and separates brother from brother, can have any claim to be considered as innocent. It is neither illogical nor uncharitable to say, that the mere circumstance of separating is no inconsiderable proof that the separatist is in an error; because it proves him to have lost, or never to have fully possessed, that Christian disposition and temper which would have made him anxious to be *like-minded; having the same love; of one accord, and of one mind* with his fellow Christians.

Allowing, then, in the fullest latitude, that cases may easily be supposed, in which it is not only justifiable, but even meritorious, to separate, still it is not to be denied, that the almost endless diversity of opinion that has prevailed on the subject of religion, and the numerous sects\* into which the Christian world has been divided, is one of the greatest calamities with which mankind have ever been visited. These divisions are the shame, the reproach, and the sin of all who occasion them: and of all the objections which Papists have urged against the Reformation there is none to which it is so difficult to give a satisfactory answer as it is to the divisions among Protestants; which, they alledge, it is of the essence of protestantism to produce†. But, with almost equal

\* No less than sixty-four different sects are said to prevail at this day in all the different parts of the British dominions.

† See *Le Deisme refuté par lui même*: par M. Bergier, première partie, p. 215.

reason, it might be alledged against Christianity itself, that it had been the fruitful parent of divisions. Of these the enemies of Christianity take advantage : and it has been chiefly by attacking them that they have been enabled too successfully to recommend an indifference to all religion, which they represent as so extremely uncertain that mankind never can agree about it \*. When, through our own weakness, we have thus given an opportunity to artful and unworthy men to sow the seeds of *confusion and every evil work*, are we to wonder that God should at length be provoked to suffer those who cannot agree with one another to be destroyed of one another ?

On no topic are the self-commissioned censors of our age more eloquent, than in their oft-repeated invectives against tests and subscriptions ; those useful barriers, by which the guardians of our Church endeavour to secure the orthodoxy of her faith. That most of their objections are either frivolous or false many able men have repeatedly proved ; but that they are all nugatory, or ill-founded, no candid person will alledge. We see, and acknowledge, that some (perhaps many) unhappy consequences result from

\* “ Les sceptiques, frappés du choc de ces divers systèmes, conclurent qu’il n’y a rien de certain ; qu’en fait de religion & de morale, un philosophe doit s’en tenir au doute absolu. De là est née l’indifférence pour toutes les opinions, à laquelle on donne le nom de tolérance. Dans l’excès du délire, l’esprit humain ne peut aller plus loin.” — *Traité Historique & Dogmatique de la vraie Religion, &c.* par M. L’Abbe Bergier, tome i. p. 32.

the caution which our rulers conceive it to be their duty to use on this occasion: but that far more and greater inconveniences would result from the intermission of such cautions, has been demonstrated again and again. In their clamours against us on this ground, the objectors seem to be as unwise as they are unjust: the temper and spirit with which their objections are urged, too clearly shew the danger of listening to them: and, whilst such men continue to be thus restlessly and bitterly busy, God forbid our test laws should be repealed! Were it not for these wholesome restrictions, neither those of our Order in particular, nor the members of our Church in general, would any longer be bound together by any common ties. We should be let loose against one another, with all our disorderly passions in full force; and the very foundations of society be inevitably destroyed.

For these reasons, therefore, as well as many others, (though, on account of the wide dispersion of the Christian world, it must necessarily be branched out into many distinct societies, or churches; yet, it being still, *though many, one body in Christ, and members one of another,*) every separate communion may, and should, consider itself as a small part of a great whole; as still a member of the \* *Catholic Church*, and the

*Communion*

\* "Those two articles in the Apostles' Creed, *the Holy Catholic Church*, and *the Communion of Saints*, were inserted on purpose to prevent schism; and that alone is their true sense and aim. No schismatic, therefore, can, with a safe conscience, repeat these

" two



*Communion of Saints* ; and, as such, bound, by some common, external, visible means, some generally acknowledged test of social unity, still to maintain a visible communion. It was thus that the Apostles and first Christians (who, as well as ourselves, had the unhappiness to think differently on various points, some of them of great importance) still were *together with one accord in breaking of bread, and in prayer*. They wisely thought that a mere difference of opinion in things not absolutely essential to salvation, instead of being a reason for separation, was an argument and motive (and, as such, is often so urged in Scripture) for greater zeal and care to keep up *the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace*. Christians in deed, as well as in name, they were so rooted *and grounded in love*, as never to suffer any debates about *doubtful questions* to interfere with plain and indispensable duties ; nor any ill-informed or ill-regulated solicitude, even for truth, to destroy that mutual forbearance, peace, and charity, which constitute the very essence of Christianity. Nor will our holy religion ever have that credit or that influence in the world (to both of which it is so well entitled) till it's professors are more attached to each other ; and till, laying aside all jealousies, animosities, *evil surmisings*, and *perverse disputings*, they have the wisdom, as well

“ two articles ; inasmuch as, by his schism, he far too clearly and  
 “ emphatically declares his disbelief of any peculiar *holiness in the*  
 “ *Catholic Church*, and his disregard of the duty and the blessing of a  
 “ *Communion of Saints*.”——King on the Creed, p. 310 and p. 325.

as the virtue (*like the multitude of them that believed*) to be of *one heart and one soul, and to dwell together as brethren in unity*. Then, notwithstanding the infinite diversity of sects, into which Christendom is unhappily divided, Christian unity might still, in a Christian sense, subsist: nor, indeed, can it ever be lost, as long as Christian charity is maintained. Were this great evangelical duty but duly practised, if it did not remove all differences, it would certainly allay all animosities: and if we still differed in judgment, we should unite in affection; we should love men's persons, even when we reprobated their opinions.

Let not these sincere suggestions in favour of mutual forbearance and charity be perversely misinterpreted, as meant to countenance the loose and dangerous, yet not unpopular, notion, that if a man is conscientious in his attachment it is of little moment to what communion he belongs. This is a very dangerous argument, and, if carried to its utmost length, would justify any extreme of irreligion. With equal reason might it be urged, that, provided a man be sincere in his conviction, it is of little moment whether he be a Christian, a Mahometan, a Pagan, or an Idolater. The subtle question of the innocency of error is not now under consideration: but permit me to observe, that if sincerity in any system of faith be sufficient to entitle a man to salvation all reasoning and argument on the subject must be vain; nay, (I will add, though not without horror,) Christ himself both lived and died in vain.

It is not only a necessary consequence of Christianity to render those who embrace it dissatisfied with their old opinions, and old principles, and anxious to adopt new ones: they do, indeed, to use the significant phraseology of Scripture, *put off the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; and put on the new man, which, after God, is created in righteousness and true holiness*: but every sincere convert to Christianity must be anxious to persuade others likewise to embrace the true faith. When the Son of God came upon earth to promulgate his gospel (not to one people only, but) to all nations, the Jews (who we know were in general sincere in their attachment to their national church) were as unconcerned about recommending their religion to others, as they were zealous to preserve it from being contaminated by others. The Romans were so far from being desirous of subjecting the people whom they conquered to their religion that they frequently adopted their gods and their ceremonies. Nor did the Greeks ever think of sending missionaries to the Persians, Egyptians, or any other people. Whilst the Gentile nations thus acquiesced each in his own system, the Saviour of the world came upon earth; and, addressing himself, with his Apostles, equally to Jew and Gentile, preached salvation to mankind through the gospel. One immediate consequence of his Advent was, that multitudes of *such as should be saved* were every where converted and added to the Church. If, then, according to this notion, a sincere



Pagan was equally in a state of salvation with a finecre Christian, it will not be easy to acquit our Saviour of the charge of having needlessly disturbed the repose of the world, by interfering with the received opinions of mankind.

But, though we humbly trust that the poor benighted heathen, on whom the bright sun of revelation has never shone, may, and will, be pardoned for his unavoidable ignorance; and no less confidently hope that all due allowances will be made for those who with their mother's milk imbibed the delusions of Popery, or for those who have been decoyed from the faith of their fathers by the allurements of the conventicle; I know not whether I am authorised to hold out the same hopes to those who (to use the words of the article of uniformity) "following their own sensuality, and living without due knowledge and fear of God, do *wilfully and schismatically* abstain and refuse to come to their parish churches." If they really do agree (as they say they do) with our Church in all essential points \*, and yet, (like Micah,) on pretences perfectly insignificant, or at least of but little importance, separate from us, setting up *a new house of gods*, and *consecrating*, or laying their own

\* The celebrated Peter Walsh (as we are informed by Bp. Burnet in the History of his own Times, vol. i. p. 110.) was of opinion, "that no man ought to forsake that religion, in which he was born and bred, unless he was clearly convinced that he must certainly be damned if he continued in it."—Sir James Ware's Hist. of Ireland, 3d vol. p. 196.

hands on their own heads; what can Charity herself say of them, but that they are schismatics, and do all in their power to rend the seamless garment of their Saviour? It is conduct like this that justifies those who reproach the schismatic with destroying the unity (just as the heretic subverts the faith) of *the Holy Catholic Church*.

It ought to be remembered, that the causes which these our brethren alledge for their separating from us do not relate to points which we deem indifferent; though, as they concern them, they acknowledge them to be such. We have at stake an ecclesiastical constitution, which we are persuaded is truly primitive and apostolical: we have a liturgy, compiled with such soundness of judgment, and such *beauty of holiness*, that, whilst it is admirably adapted to the edification of the unlearned, it cannot but engage the esteem and veneration of the most learned. These things we cannot dispense with without annihilating our Church.

This is not the case with those who separate from us. They may, any and all of them, comply with all that our Church requires, without doing any violence to their consciences: for they not only acknowledge the doctrines of our Church to be sound and pure, and her ceremonies to be at least harmless; but they have, even since they have left us, shewn so much respect to us, and regard for their own interest, as to join with us in every part of our worship. The points  
to

to which they object are not, according to their own opinion and practice, unlawful ; so that, if they were inclined to *live peaceably* with our Church *as far as is possible*, they ought to do so as far as is lawful. The passage from them to us is easy and safe ; but, for the reasons just mentioned, not so from us to them.

The adversaries of our common faith too well know the advantages they derive from these dissensions : and hence they have taken, and too probably will continue to take, great pains to foment and perpetuate them. And in no way can either a church, or a kingdom, be so effectually destroyed, as by being *divided*. *It is not an enemy* that could do us this wrong. We fight his battles, by turning all our strength against ourselves ; and may hereafter lament our own want of foresight, should we ever live (which God forbid !) to see Popery again raised on the ruins of that Church which her own members have overthrown. This, indeed, we hope, is a very improbable event ; but, it is not impossible. What has happened may happen again. Whilst we are unhappily busied in undermining our own foundations, the common enemy stands ready to enter in at the breaches we make ready for him.

The Church of England, besides the strong and irrefragable authority of the Scriptures in it's favour, has this farther recommendation, almost peculiar to itself, that all parties differing from it concur in acknowledging



knowledging that, next to their own, it is the best \*. It preserves an happy medium between the two extremes of Popery and Presbyterianism ; and is, therefore, incontestibly the fittest centre of union. And it is owing to her transcendent merit in this point of view, as well as for other reasons, that the opposers of Protestantism have always directed their attacks, not against Presbyterians and their particular doctrines, nor against any of our various sectarists and their various creeds, but against the Church of England. But (blessed be God !) founded on a rock, she has

\* “ Ita autem Ecclesiam Anglicanam colo & veneror, ut Presbyterianos vestros non tam odio, quam commiseratione, prosequor. Existimo enim majorem eorum partem, avitis præjudiciis imbutos, bonâ fide agere ; minorem reliquorum simplicitate abuti.”—Jablonski’s Letter to Dr. Nichols, from Berlin, June 10, 1708. which see in the “ Relation des Mésures qui furent prises dans les années 1711, 12, 13. pour introduire la Liturgie Anglicaïne dans le Royaume de Prusse, & dans l’Electorat de Hanover.” p. 47.

“ Si me conjectura non fallit, totius reformationis pars integra est in Angliâ ; ubi cum studio veritatis viget studium antiquitatis ; quam certi homines dum spernunt, in laqueos se inducunt, unde, nisi mendacio, exuere se nequeunt.”—Epist. II. Casauboni in Claud. Salmas.

Vide etiâ quid de publico Dei apud nos cultu, 8 Aprilis, anno MDCXLV eidem dixerit,—Grotius scilicet :

“ Liturgia Anglicana ab eruditis omnibus habita semper est optima.”

See “ Testimonia de Hugonis Grotii adfectu ad Ecclesiam Anglicanam ;” usually bound up at the end of his Treatise “ de Veritate Religionis Christianæ.”

hitherto

hitherto withstood, and for the sake of our common Christianity, and the peace of the world, we trust she will long continue to withstand all their efforts\*. If ever she is undone, it will be by Protestant, and not by Popish, hands †; but whether a motley body of various and varying sects and parties, much divided among themselves, and hardly less at variance with each other than with Popery itself, will occasion her downfall, I cannot pretend to determine. Whether they, however, are more likely to preserve our common country from such a calamity, than the steady and consistent members of a respectable and respected Church, (which a learned foreigner once called “the eye of the reformation ‡,”) one might almost leave it to our separatists themselves to say.

\* “Concerning the weakening of the English Church, there can no better way possibly be found out, than by causing divisions and dissensions among themselves. And as for their religion, it cannot easily be rooted out and extinguished here, unless there were some certain schools set up in Flanders, by means of which there should be scattered abroad the seeds of schism, &c.”—Discourse of Spanish Monarchy, &c. by Campanella, a Jesuit, p. 157. c. 25.

† The divisions among Protestants are not unlike those which prevailed among the ancient Britons; and much does it concern us all to pray, that they may not at length produce the same effects.

“Per principes factionibus & studiis trahuntur. Nec aliud adversus validissimas gentes nobis utilius, quam quod in commune non consulunt. Rarus duabus tribusve civitatibus ad propulsandum commune periculum conventus; ita dum singuli pugnant, universi vincuntur.”—Tacit. de Vitâ Agricolaë, cap. xii.

‡ . . . . . “florentissima Anglia, ocellus ille ecclesiarum peculium Christi singulare, &c.”—Diodati.

Composed as these sectaries of our western world in general are of a confused heterogeneous mass of infidels and enthusiasts, oddly blended and united, (most of them ignorant, and all of them shamefully illiterate,) it is not easy, in a serious discourse, to speak of them with becoming gravity. St. Paul (with that spirit of research and penetration which distinguishes his writings) touches both on the cause and effect of such separations, when he describes the promoters of them as persons having *itching ears* and *unstable in all their ways*, and who are therefore *easily tossed about with every wind of doctrine*. They seem to be actuated by a sort of spiritual wantonness; because, as is observed by the same Apostle, *guided by their lusts*, and *heaping to themselves teachers*, they cannot *endure sound doctrine*. I am loth to add (what yet truth extorts from me) that the picture drawn of them in his epistle to Timothy is as exact a representation of at least a majority of these separatists as if they had been the very persons designed. They are proud, *knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, railings, evil surmisings, perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds and destitute of truth*. And this being the case, let me fairly appeal to the most candid of my hearers, whether such persons do not clearly and directly fall under the censures and the penalties of the 9th, 10th, 11th, and 12th canons of the Church of England: inasmuch as they “separate themselves from the *communion of saints*, as it “is approved by the Apostles’ rules in the Church of  
“ England;



“ England ; and combine themselves together in a  
“ new brotherhood, accounting the Christians who  
“ are conformable to the doctrine, government, rites  
“ and ceremonies of the Church of England to be pro-  
“ phane, and unmeet for them to join with in Chris-  
“ tian profession.”

Of the consequences to be expected from this general dissemination of delusion and error, men judge differently according to their different tempers and different degrees of information. Enthusiasts conceive it to be the commencement of a millennium : whilst others, of a less sanguine temperament, though they cannot so far give up their common sense as to imagine that these blind guides can possibly lead their still blinder followers to any thing that is really good, yet plead for their being let alone and suffered to pursue their own projects in their own way, from a persuasion that they are too insignificant to do any harm ; and that the taking any public notice of them is giving them too much consequence, and pursuing that plan which of all others is best calculated to render them still more popular. To this common and trite argument it may be answered, that this is not a case in which there can be any neutrality : those who are not for the Church are against it ; and if Micah of old was guilty of a great crime, these men cannot be innocent. Nor is there more real weight in the suggestions of cautious discretion, that it is best not to notice erroneous opinions and mischievous persons, lest censure should raise them into consequence,

Neither

Neither moralists, nor preachers, nor legislators, in denouncing vices, regard who the persons are that are guilty of them : were the case otherwise, and were it true that vice, by being prohibited, becomes popular, moralists and preachers, and even legislators, might be charged with being the authors, rather than the correctors, of immorality and impiety.

What evils this prevalence of sectarianism, so sudden, so extraordinary, and so general, may portend to the State, I care not to think ; recollecting with horror, that just such were the *signs of the times* previous to the grand rebellion in the last century. There is no denying that such disorders indicate a distempered government ; just as blotches and boils indicate a bad habit of body. For, it has been observed, that sects in religion, and parties in politics, generally prevail together. By a sort of mutual action and re-action they produce one another ; both, in their turns, becoming causes and effects. Whenever (to use Scripture phraseology) *there is no king in Israel*, that is to say, whenever, through any cause, the reins of government are relaxed, or it's energies impeded, then are mankind tempted to act the part of Micah, that is, to run into parties, and to frame new schemes of religion for themselves. Indeed, sects in Religion and parties in the State originate, in general, from similar principles. A sect is, in fact, a revolt against the authority of the Church, just as a faction is against the authority of the State ; or, in other words, a sect is a faction in the Church, as a faction is a sect in the State ;  
and

and the spirit which refuses obedience to the one, is equally ready to resist the other \*. Nor (however little it may seem to be attended to) is it an ordinary degree either of guilt or of danger when such men dare to persist to do, in the face of the laws, what those laws expressly forbid. It is thus that institutions and regulations, which are of great moment to the welfare of society, are, imperceptibly and gradually, weakened and destroyed; for, when the laws are allowed to be set at nought in one instance, they are seldom much regarded at all.

In private life, the mischiefs occasioned by schisms and sects are more obvious; and perhaps not much, if at all, less grievous. The discouragement which has thus been given to that exertion and honest industry by which families should be maintained, and the misapplication and waste of the hard earnings of many persons in the inferior classes of life, which it is now well known this epidemic frenzy has occasioned, are matters of too much moment not to command a very general attention. In travelling through the country, it is easy to know the districts in which these *new lights* most abound, by the neglected plantations;

\* Extat prudens monitum Mecænatis apud Dionem Cassium ad hæc verba. “Eos verò qui in divinis aliquid innovant, odio habere & coercere; non deorum solum causâ, sed quia nova numina hi tales introducentes, multos impellunt ad mutationem rerum. Unde conjurationes, seditiones, *conciliabula*, existunt; res profectò minime conducibiles principatui. Et legibus quoque expressum est, quod in religionem committitur, id in omnium fertur injuriam.” — *Critici Sacri*.



by the assemblages we meet with; and by the looks of meagre, dejected, and squalid people crowding to hear field preachers.

Even this great evil, however, is perhaps not so intolerable as the harm that is done by the disputes, the ill-will, and the feuds, which are thus engendered among people who before lived together in harmony. Instead of *all walking by the same rule, and all minding the same things, one says, I am of Paul, and I of Apollos, and I of Cephas, and I of Christ; as if Christ could be divided*\*. For, though religious disputes ought, of all others, to be carried on with good temper and mildness, they seem, as conducted by these persons, apt to excite bitterness and rancour. A late truly excellent preacher of our Church, speaking of the controversialists of his time, uses this forcible language; which, however, is not less applicable to our disputing sectaries: “Instead of soothing men’s natures, softening their tempers, sweetening their humours, composing their affections, and raising their minds above the follies of the present world to the hope and pursuit of endless blessedness; they are de-

\* “Hi psalmum invertunt, & canunt in cordibus suis,—Ecce, quam bonum & jucundum est *disturbare* fratres, ut non habitent in unum! sed alius huc, alius illuc proruat. Neque tamen habent pacem & concordiam pro balsamo, sed semper nova quærunt; nec putant se aut doctores, aut pastores, ecclesiarum esse posse, nisi a nobis dissentiant, & quiddam novum sibi excogitent. Hos fugere debemus, & cavere nè eorum similes simus.”—Luth. Enarr. in Psalm. cxxxiii. in Seckendorf. lib. 3. p. 305.

“feating the true end for which the Son of God came  
 “into the world, and doing the work of the powers  
 “of darknefs; leading men into the dry and angry  
 “work of making parties, and fettling needlefs opi-  
 “nions; and at the fame time becoming flacker in  
 “the great duties, which were chiefly defigned by  
 “the Christian doctrine \*.”

It would feem, that, in thefe men, religion exhausts itfelf in profeflion: the more of it that they have in their mouths, the lefs charity there is in their hearts. Againft the minifters of the eftablifhed Church their cenfures are particularly fharp and fevere: in their harangues, they are liberal only in beftowing on our whole Order the coarfe epithets of venal and corrupt hirelings, carnal-minded and ungodly teachers. It is, in moft cafes of difpute, fome confolation to know, that the conflicts of contending parties are not embittered by perfonal animofity: but this confolation is far from affording us any relief. Indeed we love the Church too well not to feel when fhe fuffers. Thefe men wifh to prejudice you againft the minifters of the Church of England, only with a view to prejudice you againft her doctrines; juft as they quarrel with human learning, from a confcioufnefs that it is the province of learning to detect and expofe their folly and falfehood. Their conduct, however, will excite in us no fenfation, but

\* The lapfe of near thirty years fince my fermon was written muft be my excufe for not recollecting the author from whom this paffage is taken.

that of pity for their errors, and their sufferings. Let our only solicitude respecting them be, to have their errors removed, that so their sufferings may be avoided. All that we can farther do, or need wish to do, is *faithfully to exercise ourselves in the Holy Scriptures, and to call upon God by prayer for the true understanding the same; so as that we may be able to teach and exhort with wholesome doctrine, and to withstand and convince gainsayers.*

The magistracy, anxious to maintain and promote, as much as in them lies, quietness, love, and peace among all men; and sensible of their duty *to correct and punish such as be unquiet, disobedient and criminous*, after having with much patience forborne to enforce the penalties provided by the law against these refractory people, have at length suffered the law to take its course. But, notwithstanding their imprisonment, it is in their own power, whenever they choose to cease to be contumacious, and to give security for a more orderly conduct hereafter, to obtain their release. If, however, they should again be so wrong-headed as wilfully to incur the same or greater penalties, let neither the magistrates, nor the clergy, be blamed as the causes of their disgrace; nor the compassion of unthinking multitudes be excited by rash and unfounded charges that such persons have been persecuted for conscience-sake.

It is not only the magistracy and the clergy who lament this *beginning of strife* among us; I am willing to believe that a majority of you who hear me



this day are no less grieved at these divisions. Effectually and at once to prevent their spreading any farther, is not perhaps in the power of any of us ; but something, I trust, even now we may all do towards it : the magistracy, by continuing to exercise their just authority with a mild and temperate, but prudent, firmness ; the clergy, by being, if possible, more diligent, more earnest, more exemplary ; and all of us, by shewing *not only with our lips, but in our lives, how good and pleasant a thing it is for brethren to dwell together in unity !* Then may we hope, that, in God's own good time, (when, by his grace, he shall be pleased to give a blessing to our well-meant and well-directed endeavours,) this breach will be healed.

Men may be deterred from the commission of crimes by severity of punishment : but, of all the means which can be taken to reclaim them from error, compulsion seems the least likely to be generally successful. [Human nature has implanted in us a degree of obstinacy, which makes us tenacious of what is opposed, for no better reason than because it is opposed.] Add to this, such are the dread and abhorrence which men in general have, and ought to have, of every thing which wears but the semblance of intolerance and persecution in matters of religion, that, great as the evils of schism unquestionably are, if it can be got rid of only by rigorous pains and penalties, in God's name let it continue ! the remedy would be worse than the disease. Happily, the humane laws of  
our

our country do not leave persecution in our power : if they did, the laws of our religion, and common Christian prudence, would restrain us. This lenity and this forbearance to men's persons (so becoming us both as men and as Christians) are by no means incompatible with the most determined opposition to such of their doctrines or practices as we deem pernicious. This, when undertaken on Christian principles, and conducted with a Christian temper, is not only allowable, but a duty\*.

\* “ If there seeme tares to be in the Church, yet our fayth and  
 “ charitie ought not to be letted or hindered, that because we see  
 “ tares in the Church, we should therefore depart from the Church.  
 “ We ought rather to labour to be made the good wheate, that  
 “ when the wheate shall be layde by in the Lorde's barne, we may  
 “ receive fruite for our worke and labour. The Apostle (2 Tim. ii.  
 “ ver. 20.) saith, *in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and*  
 “ *silver, but also of wood and of earth, and some to dishonour.* Let us  
 “ endeavour ourselves, as much as we can, that we may be *vessels of*  
 “ *gold and silver.* But it pertains to the Lord only to break in pieces  
 “ the earthen vessels ; to whom also the iron rod is given. The  
 “ servant cannot be greater than his master ; neither let any man  
 “ think to challenge to himselfe that thing which God the Father  
 “ geveeth onely to his Sonne, that he may think himselfe able to  
 “ *purge the floore,* and to fanne the chaffe from the wheate, or to  
 “ sever the tares from the wheate by man's judgemente. This is  
 “ a proud obstinacy, and a sacrilegious presumption, whiche a mad  
 “ fury usurpeth to itselfe. And whilest some men always take the  
 “ Lord to themselves more than meeke justice doth require, they do  
 “ perish, and go out of the Church ; and whilest they do extoll  
 “ themselves proudly, they, being blinded with their owne pride,  
 “ do leese the light of veritie.”——St. Cyprian, as translated by the  
 Bishop of Exeter, in his Poor Man's Library. Printed by John  
 Daye in 1571.

The true Christian plan of opposing those who will not *endure sound doctrine*, is the best : and that is, by *having no fellowship with them, but rather reproofing them*. The same Apostle, to whom we are indebted for the excellent advice just mentioned, has also farther instructed us, on what topics our reproofs should turn, and also in what manner they should be urged. We are to *preach the word ; to be instant in season, and out of season ; to reprove ; to rebuke ; to exhort with all long-suffering, and doctrine*. And our exhortations are most likely to be effectual when our actions correspond with our words, and when we *shew our faith by our works*. If we enforce our precepts by our examples, and manifest the superiority of our religion by our superiority in holy living, we may easily confute any separatists, though inferior to them in the arts of argumentation. We can easily demonstrate, how blameable and guilty they are who needlessly *go away* from our National Church ; and how meritorious it is in us to be fixed and steady in our principles, and to abide in her communion. But can we as easily shew them that, with a better profession, we have a better practice, and are better men ? If we cannot, (and, alas, it is much to be feared that in too many cases we cannot !) how much have we to answer for, whilst, by the irregularity of our lives, we bring discredit on our religion, and drive those from our Church, who, by a more consistent conduct on our parts, might have been preserved, and have become our warmest and best friends !



Permit me then, finally, to exhort with all earnestness the members of the Establishment to let these our unhappy brethren of the Separation always find in us fellow-creatures, and fellow-christians; always disposed and ready to render them any office of humanity, of kindness, and of brotherly love. I do not wish you to remit your endeavours to reclaim them, by demonstrating to them occasionally the evils and the dangers of their schism: but let your zeal always be tempered with prudence and tenderness; and, watching times and seasons, instead of using upbraiding expressions, labour, by the gentleness of your manner, to conciliate their good-will; thus giving them an endearing proof of the benevolence of our religion. In no instance will the correctness of our own conduct be followed by more beneficial effects than it will by the punctuality of our attendance on the services of our own Church. This just and proper care in great things will, of course, be accompanied by a corresponding care about matters of subordinate moment: and if, by the exemplariness of our own conduct, we can bring back again these our now-alienated brethren, let us hope, that the decent and dignified style of our worship, together with the better order which (with all our degeneracy) still prevails among us, may yet convince them of the impropriety and meanness of that which they call worship.

But let it be again repeated, and for ever remembered, that the best (perhaps the only) means of *bringing back into the way of truth all such as have*

*erred, and are deceived, is our being doubly careful, ourselves, to adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things. So shall they who yet stand, be strengthened; the weak-hearted, be comforted and helped; those who have fallen, be raised; and Satan finally be beaten down under our feet. And so too shall those, who now (through delusion) have forsaken us, be fetched home to the common fold of our common Lord: and we all, once more, be one fold, under one shepherd, Jesus Christ the righteous.*

“ O God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, our  
“ only Saviour, the Prince of Peace! give us grace  
“ seriously to lay to heart the great dangers we are  
“ in from our unhappy divisions. Take away all  
“ hatred and prejudice, and whatsoever else may  
“ hinder us from godly union and concord: that, as  
“ there is but one body and one spirit and one hope of  
“ our calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one  
“ God and father of us all; so we may henceforth be  
“ all of one heart and one soul, united in one holy  
“ bond of truth and peace, of faith and charity, and  
“ may, with one mind and one mouth, glorify thee,  
“ through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen!”

## DISCOURSE III.

ON THE AMERICAN EPISCOPATE.

IN TWO PARTS\*.

ISAIAH, ch. v. ver. 5, 6, 7.

*And now, go to, I will tell you what I will do to my vineyard: I will take away the hedge thereof, and it shall be eaten up; and break down the wall thereof; and it shall be trodden down. And I will lay it waste: it shall not be pruned nor digged, but there shall come up briers and thorns. I will also command the clouds, that they rain no rain upon it. For, the vineyard of the Lord of Hosts is the house of Israel, and the men of Judah his pleasant plant: and he looked for judgment, but behold oppression; for righteousness, but behold a cry.*

**T**HE parable, of which the three verses just read to you may be called the exposition, or moral, is not more beautiful, than it is instructive. The term

\* Preached at St. Mary's Church in Caroline County, in Virginia; in the year 1771.



*vineyard*, by which, in the Scriptures, the Church, (that is, the Elect, or chosen people of God) is usually designated, seems here to be applied to the *house of Israel*, rather in their religious, than in their civil, capacity. And, as the whole composition is clearly allegorical, consistency requires that we should interpret all the circumstances which are mentioned concerning it in a sense analagous to it's leading purpose. Of course by the word *fence* (mentioned in the passage, of which the text is a part) is to be understood those rules and ordinances, by which the founder of this Church saw fit to guard it from error, whether in principle or in practice: the *stones that were to be gathered* out of this vineyard, before it could be *planted with the chosen vine*, seem not more clearly to refer to the idolatrous nations which were to be driven out of the land of Canaan (when the house of Israel was to be *planted* there in their stead) than they do to the propriety of excluding the avowed enemies of the Church from any participation in it's government: and finally, the *tower*, which (whatever be it's literal import, both here and in those passages of the gospel in which our Saviour seems clearly to have adopted the imagery of this parable \*) implying something of strength, defence, and protection †, may undoubtedly be

\* See Matth. xxi. 33, 34; and Mark xii. 1.

† It is no uncommon imagery among ancient writers to call a person who affords a place of retreat, shelter and protection to another, a *tower*. Thus Medea, meditating the dreadful destruction of her

be understood to mean the guardians or governors whom the Almighty saw fit to appoint to the superintendence of his Church.

The parable proceeds to state, in a manner equally affecting and forcible, that, admirably as this vineyard was planned and laid out, yet, owing either to the want of care, want of zeal, or want of fidelity in its protectors, it ran to ruin; and so, *instead of grapes*, that is, the fruit of that *choice vine* which had been planted in it, it *brought forth wild grapes*. This, consistently with the general scope of the parable, must be understood to imply, that, instead of those *fruits of righteousness*, which may be *looked for* from a true Church, this neglected and ill-governed Church, alluded to in the parable, almost necessarily produced, in regular succession, divisions, strifes, disputings about religion, latitudinarianism, deism, irreligion, and infidelity.

How applicable all this is to us, and our Church, cannot but be obvious to you. If, in any point, the resemblance may seem to fail, it is in this, that, instead of having our hedges judicially broken down, trodden on, and taken away, we can hardly be said ever to have raised any *fence* at all. If our Church be not

her husband's house, puts it on the condition of her being able to find some person capable and willing to protect her: "Ὁ μὲν τις ἡμῶν πύργος ασφαλῆς φανῇ, that is, "if any one should arise as a tower of safety to us." Mr. Woodhul, however, more literally renders it—"if I can find some *fortress*." Homer also somewhere says, Τεῖχος γὰρ σφιν πύργος ἀπώλειτο.

wholly

wholly without rules and ordinances, she certainly has no constitutional authoritative guardians to enforce them.

It was (I believe) about the middle of the last century that our want of bishops was sensibly felt and lamented, and that applications for remedying the evil were made to the throne. These applications were thought so reasonable, that, under Charles the Second, a patent was actually made out for appointing a bishop of Virginia. By some fatality or other (such as seems for ever to have pursued all the good measures of the monarchs of that unfortunate family) the patent was not signed when the king died: and, from that time to this, all exertions for the attainment of this desirable object, though they have never wholly ceased, have been as languid as the opposition to them has been vehement. Never before, in any period of our history, or in any part of the empire, was a measure so harmless, so necessary, and so salutary, resisted and defeated on grounds so frivolous, so unwise, and so unjust. An account of it (if an accurate account of it could be given) would not only place the state of America in a new point of view, but exhibit a new feature in the history of mankind. So striking an instance of one part of a community being suffered thus to wrong another on mere surmises and suspicions, and without any provocation, (as has been done by the opponents of episcopacy,) it is hardly possible to produce. Or if (considering how many cases may be met with in every history, in which mankind have

perversely



perversely thwarted and spited one another) this assertion should be deemed somewhat too peremptory, it may at least be affirmed with confidence, that never before did any government suffer itself to be so dictated to, and overawed, as the British government did in the case before us. It is still more extraordinary that this part has been acted by the inferior, the benefited, and the obliged party: and that government has thus done violence to all the common principles of policy, in disobliging it's acknowledged friends, for the sake of obliging those whose greatest merit, as subjects, is that they have not yet, with open force, attempted the destruction of that essential part of our constitution against which they omit no opportunity to declare their enmity. If, whilst they are thus hostile to the Church, we really can believe them to be cordial friends to the State, all I can say is, that we shall pay a compliment to their loyalty, at the expence of their consistency\*.

Heretofore,

\* "The Clergy of the Church of England, as in matters of faith  
 " and morality they acknowledge no guide but the Scriptures, so  
 " in matters of external polity and private right they derive all  
 " their title from the civil magistrate. They look up to the king  
 " as their head, to the parliament as their law-giver; and pride  
 " themselves in nothing so justly as in being true members of the  
 " Church, emphatically, by law established. Whereas the prin-  
 " ciples of those who differ from them, as well in one extreme as  
 " the other, are equally and totally destructive of those ties and  
 " obligations, by which all society is kept together; equally en-  
 " croaching on those rights which reason and the original contract

" of

Heretofore, the objectors to episcopacy were found only among avowed dissenters. *Their* dislike to it is consistent, as it is one of the chief reasons they assign for separating from us: however, much as we may, and do, lament their having left us, we have a right to blame those of them only, who, not contented with their own dislike, will not bear our continuing to like it. But, it is our singular fate to have lived to see a most extraordinary event in church history; professed churchmen fighting the battles of dissenters, and our *worst enemies* now literally *those of our own household*.

It can hardly be necessary to inform you, that I here allude to the protest of four Clergymen \* against an

“ of every free state in the universe have vested in the sovereign  
 “ power; and equally aiming at a distinct and independent supremacy of their own. The dreadful effects of such bigotry, when  
 “ actuated by erroneous principles, even of the protestant kind, was  
 “ sufficiently evident from the history of the anabaptists in Germany, the covenanters in Scotland, and that deluge of sectaries  
 “ in England, who murdered their sovereign, shook every pillar of  
 “ law, justice, and private property, and most devoutly established a  
 “ kingdom of saints in their stead.”——Blackstone, Book iv. ch. 8.  
 vol. iv. p. 104.

\* “ As for those in the Clergy, whose place and calling is lower,  
 “ were it not that their eyes are blinded, lest they should see the  
 “ thing that of all others is for their good most effectual, somewhat  
 “ they might consider the benefit they would enjoy, by having such  
 “ an authority over them as are of the same profession, body, and  
 “ society with them; such as have trodden the same steps before;  
 “ such as know, by their own experience, the manifold intolerable  
 “ contempts

an application to the throne for an American episcopate, which was drawn up by a convention of the Clergy held in Williamsburg last June; and to the thanks voted by the House of Burgesses \* to these protesters. This extraordinary measure (in my humble opinion) is a direct attack on that Church which both the protesters and those who thanked them are bound to support, and at least an act of disobedience to that king whom both are equally bound to *honour and obey*. Forbearance on such a point the burgesses owed to their constituents, who elected them as guardians of that constitution of which the established Church is one essential part: what respect the Clergy owed to the Church, whose ministers they are; to their ordination vows; and to their own characters, none but themselves (I think) can be at a loss to determine.

I am not single in lamenting that so respectable a body of men as the Lower House of Assembly of Virginia did not act more cautiously. Whatever any individuals among them might think of the introduction of a bishop into this country, the question

“contempts and indignities, which faithful pastors, intermingled with the multitude, are constrained every day to suffer in the exercise of their spiritual charge and function, unless their superiors, taking their cause even to heart, be, by a kind of sympathy, drawn to aid and relieve them, in their virtuous proceedings, no less than loving parents their dear children.”—Hooker’s Ecclesiastical Polity, Book the 7th, p. 417.

\* That branch of the legislature in Virginia, which is equivalent to the House of Commons in Great Britain.



was not then before them. I do not see how it ever can come before them ; but (certainly) nothing has yet occurred relative to it, that calls for their interference. Even admitting that they all thought such a measure ill-judged, or dangerous, the way they took to express their disapprobation was neither prudent nor decorous. It was not prudent, because, as far as it has any effect, it discourages their friends, and encourages their foes : and it was not decorous, because, instead of stating any well-founded objections of their own, they stooped to the meanness of adopting the apprehensions of others. Whatever be their dislike to episcopacy, it is hardly within the reach of supposition that they can be pleased with the apostacy of the protesters ; who, at this moment, are eating the bread of that Church whom they so ungratefully desert in this her hour of need.

After all, there is reason to believe, that this resolve of thanks was an hasty and inconsiderate resolve, and was carried in a thin house taken by surprise. This is a misfortune to which all men, in their public capacities, are liable ; and therefore every possible allowance should be made for it. Of those who did acquiesce in the vote, several might not foresee the consequences of what they were doing. And when time shall have cooled men's passions, and prejudice shall give way to reason, not a doubt can be entertained but that, both for their own honour, and the honour of the established Church, this resolve will be rescinded from their Journals.

Many old men among us, who had the happiness to be established in their principles in other times than these, see and lament that a great change has taken place with respect to the Church and Churchmen in Virginia. They remember when, excepting a few inoffensive quakers, there was not in the whole colony a single congregation of dissenters of any denomination.

The first act of assembly passed in Virginia after the Restoration was an Act for the Settlement of Religion. Its preamble is curious :—" Because it is impossible " to serve and honour the king as we ought, unless " we serve God ; therefore be it enacted, &c." thus making the service and honour of the king the reason of the act for the service of God and the establishment of religion. This act is founded altogether on the good old principle of obedience for conscience sake. Loyalty was then as eminent as what we call Liberty is now rampant.

Loyalty, in its excesses, may have been absurd ; but it never was servile : even in those days of exuberant loyalty, our people were capable of thinking for themselves ; and what they thought they were not afraid to assert. Virginia was the last of the British dominions that submitted to Cromwell's usurpation, and the first that proclaimed Charles II. king. But now, taking our cue from popular declaimers and popular writers in the Parent State, we are as forward as the boldest to reprobate all those high notions of loyalty which so honourably distinguished

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guished us in the best periods of our history. On the principles of an equal zeal for the prerogatives of the crown, and for the just liberties of the people, our constitution was founded; and on these alone it can now be maintained: though every pert smatterer in politics has the hardiness and irreverence to attack all those it's strong points, which our ancestors revered as it's chief excellence and support. It surely was something more than ridiculous, when (not long since) a popular candidate at one of our elections solicited your suffrages in his favour, on the plea of his being, as to his political tenets, a Whig, and the advocate of revolution principles; and in religion, a Low-churchman. If folly can ever excuse audacity, this man's utter ignorance of the terms he used, may be admitted as some apology for his presumption. There is (no doubt) a sober sense to which these now fashionable terms may be restricted, so as not to be inconsistent with the duties which every wise and good man owes to his country: but (it is with sorrow I declare) this is not the sense in which I have of late generally heard them used, or in which they were used by the popular candidate in question. The conduct of those among us who are most forward to assume these titles affords but too frequent proofs, that to be a whig consists in being haughty and overbearing in domestic life; in being insolent to inferiors, and tyrannical to slaves; that to support revolution principles is, in every thing, to oppose and thwart the executive power; and that to be a low-church



church-man is to entertain and avow a low opinion of religion in general, and especially of established religion, manifested by never going to church. That so total and important a change in the public mind cannot fail to have a mighty influence on the whole of our colonial system, is evident : but, as the discussion of such a point may not perhaps be thought immediately connected with the question before us, I wave it ; and (for the present) content myself with observing that, though such causes have not hitherto been much insisted on in the controversy, they appear clearly to be the ground-work of all the present opposition to episcopacy.

A few years ago it was the misfortune of the Clergy of this colony to have a dispute with it's Laity. You will readily recollect, that I allude to the act of assembly which was called the Two-penny Act. Of this act (anxious as I am not to repeat grievances) suffice it to say that, on the final decision of the dispute, the Assembly was found to have done, and the Clergy to have suffered, wrong. The aggrieved may, and we hope often do, forgive ; but it has been observed that aggressors very rarely forgive. Ever since this controversy your Clergy have experienced every kind of discourtesy and discouragement. It is allowed, that the Church is still in great want of the public countenance and encouragement : yet so far are we from being permitted to look up to you as the patrons and protectors of piety and learning, that we are threatened to be reduced to an hum-

ble dependence on popular authority and popular caprice.

One consequence of this change in the public opinion and public conduct towards us is, that, although thirty years ago there was not in the whole colony a single dissenting congregation, there are now, according to the best information I can obtain, not less than eleven dissenting ministers regularly settled, who have each from two to four congregations under their care. As to the numbers of sectaries and itinerant priests, (and in particular of those swarms of separatists who have sprung up among us within the last seven years, under the name of anabaptists and new-lights,) I might almost as well pretend to count the gnats that buzz around us in a summer's evening. Like gnats, moreover, the noise which sectaries make not only disturbs and is disagreeable, but we find, that though they can neither give pleasure, nor do any good, they do not want either the disposition or the ability of those little insignificant animals to tease, to sting, and to torment.

To those who are aware how much more apt all multitudes are to be guided by their passions than by their judgment, it will not appear extraordinary, that, in such times as these, a scheme proposed by the Clergy should excite the jealousy of such a people. But, that such jealousies are either necessary, wise, or just, can be imagined by those only who are so ill-informed as to think the maintenance of true religion of no moment to a State ; and have so little judgment

or so little concern for the true interest of their country, as to suppose, that it's present form of civil government may be thus altered, by multitudes and by mobs, without infinite detriment to our civil as well as to our religious interests. To oppose episcopacy is in effect to fly in the face of, and to oppose, the established Church. Now, whether this Church be most favourable to *true religion*, and to our present admirable constitution ; or those other CHURCHES, as they are proud to be called, which too probably hope to rise on her ruins, let the protesters, and those who have thanked the protesters, judge for themselves : but let them not (as is evidently their aim) judge for others.

Every country acts naturally and prudently in making it's ecclesiastical polity conformable to it's civil government : [and it certainly is not easy, if it be possible, to name a government that ever subsisted long without some connexion or alliance with religion \*.] In arbitrary governments, the Church has a corresponding domination ; whilst, in democracies, ecclesiastics are in general wholly dependent on the people. Ours is a mixed government, partaking equally of monarchical and popular authority ; and consequently, the government of the Church is also mixed. Thus formed and fitted for each other, Church and State mutually support, and are supported by, each other.

\* M. Lally-Tolendal, in his eloquent Defence of the French Emigrants, shews, that a *National Church* is essential even under a *republican* form of government.



Each is a part of each ; each a part of the constitution : and an injury cannot be done to the one without the other's feeling it.

Every maxim or principle of this sort that applies to the Parent State is no less applicable to this *dominion* \*. If the civil and ecclesiastical parts of the constitution there be so intimately connected and blended together that they cannot be dissevered without mutual detriment and danger, there must be no inconsiderable danger and detriment in their being dissevered here ; because the government of this country professes to be, and is, formed on the model of that. And if we have hitherto subsisted without such a complete and perfect union of Church and State, it is probable (if indeed it be not certain) that this our trans-Atlantic constitution has been materially injured by it. It has, indeed, been so palpably and greatly injured by this growing indifference to our religious interests, that many firm friends of their country think they see but too much reason to fear, that if it be not speedily and effectually altered, a sad experience will soon convince the most incredulous and heedless, how mischievous and fatal their error, or their inattention, has been. God forbid any of us should live to see the day when we may be convinced of the truth of king James's maxim—"No bishop, no king !" and when this *dominion*, now the fair image of one of the best governments upon

\* Before the late revolution, Virginia was never, like the other colonies, called a *province*, rarely a *colony* : it's general term of designation was *dominion*.

earth, shall be so degenerate and mean as to become the ape of New England in her civil institutions, and therefore too likely to follow the same wretched model in what the people of New England call the *platform* of religion ! And when it is recollected, that, till now, the opposition to an American episcopate \* has been confined chiefly to the demagogues and independents of the New England provinces, but that it is now espoused with much warmth by the people of Virginia, it requires no great depth of political sagacity to see what the motives and views of the former have been, or what will be the consequences of the defection of the latter.

The constitution of the Church of England is approved, confirmed, and adopted by our laws, and interwoven with them. No other form of church-

\* “ Monf. Gaches, one of the ministers of Charenton, asks, how  
 “ comes it to pass, that those of your (English) Presbyterians, who  
 “ are great, understanding, and wise men, have such an aversion  
 “ against moderate episcopacy ? The name of schism may do more  
 “ harm in one year, than all the excess of episcopal authority  
 “ can do in an age. And Monf. Le Moyne also says, I confess I conceive not by what spirit they are led, who oppose that  
 “ (episcopal) government, and cry it down with such violence. For,  
 “ I defy any man, whoever he be, to shew me another Order more  
 “ suitable with reason, or better agreeing with Holy Scripture ;  
 “ and of which God made more use for the establishment of his  
 “ truth, and the amplification of his kingdom.—In the first age,  
 “ there was always some subordination in the Church ; and in the  
 “ time of her innocency, she was always conducted by a govern-  
 “ ment equivalent to the episcopal.”—Durell, p. 122—124, 125.

government than that of the Church of England would be compatible with the form of our civil government. No other colony has retained so large a portion of the monarchical part of the British constitution as Virginia; and between that attachment to monarchy and the government of the Church of England there is a strong connexion \*. A levelling republican spirit in the Church naturally leads to republicanism in the State; neither of which would heretofore have been endured in this *ancient dominion*.

As the Church of England government is adapted to the laws of our country, so is the order of bishops adapted to our liturgy; which always supposes bishops to be resident among us. And indeed some parts of it cannot properly be used on any other supposition. If we are still to go on without bishops, that we may be consistent, it will be necessary that we should also be without a liturgy; or, at any rate, that the excellent one we now use should undergo several material alterations.

Since then *it is evident to all men diligently reading the Scriptures and ancient authors*, (as our Church in

\* "His Majesty has summoned this convocation, not only because it is usual upon holding a parliament, but out of pious zeal to do every thing that may tend to the establishment of the Church of England; which is so eminent a part of the reformation, and is certainly *best suited to the constitution of this government*."—King William's Speech to the Convention. See Tindall's Continuation of Rapin.



the general preface to her Ordination offices declares,) *that from the Apostles' time there has been this order in Christ's Church, bishops, priests and deacons, as several offices* : and that episcopacy, thus founded, was propagated over the world with the faith itself, (there being no nation that received the one without the other,) let us at length learn to consider bishops (not with the jaundiced eyes of party pique, but in their true light) as dignified, learned, and faithful guides of souls, to be sent hither purely on a religious account, to perform functions, which, in these countries and these times, seem to be peculiarly necessary. These functions (besides the government of the Clergy, and besides their being the intermediate links to connect the Clergy with the Legislative or Executive Power) are ordination and confirmation, offices purely episcopal, and such as in no well-ordered church were ever administered by any one under the dignity of a bishop.

The want of ordination is an infringement of religious liberty ; depriving churchmen of an indulgence and advantage which are not withheld from dissenters. The same may be said of the want of confirmation. It matters not that many Christians, who are of a different communion, think lightly of confirmation. As long as there are many thousands of good subjects, who believe it to be essential to Christians, no reason can be given why they should not be tolerated as well as other Christians. are in the rites and doctrines of their respective religions.

Confirmation

Confirmation is of great antiquity : it began with the Apostles, and has been continued down to this day. We are told in the Acts \*, that St. Philip, though ordained to preach the gospel, and even empowered to work miracles, would not assume the office of confirming his own converts, the Samaritans, but left it to the apostles St. Peter and St. John as their peculiar province. Accordingly they were sent by the College of the Apostles to *lay hands on them*, (that is, to confirm them,) a ceremony still performed by the laying on of hands. We Protestants do not, with the Romanists, make this rite a sacrament : yet we understand and believe it to be a conveyance of grace to the person confirmed. This inference is drawn from that passage in Scripture †, in which we are informed, that the Ephesians, after they were baptized and confirmed by St. Paul, *received the Holy Ghost* ; as was the case with the Samaritans mentioned in the viii<sup>th</sup> chapter of the Acts ‡. And, considering the nature of the ceremony, what can be more proper, than that persons, who have been baptized in their infancy, should, *when they come to years of discretion*, take upon themselves their baptismal vows ; and in their own persons ratify and confirm what their sureties, *by reason of their tender age, did then promise for them* ?

And however lightly some persons may affect to regard the blessing, which is to be pronounced *by the*

\* Chap. viii. 17.

† Acts xix. 6.

‡ Ver. 17.

*bishop, if he be present*, we, who deduce it from apostolical authority, may at least be forgiven for wishing it could be obtained; and for hoping also, (as one of the popes is reported to have expressed himself,) that it may do good, and can do no harm.

It is no part of my principles or purpose to be the apologist of any thing that is really superstitious. But there is reason to fear that many things essential to true religion are now sometimes depreciated, merely under the notion of their being superstitious. It is to be hoped, however, that there is no superstition in believing that what God has promised he will perform; or in believing that he accompanies with his blessing means which are of his own appointing. Let it, under this head, be yet farther added, that our Church lays such a stress on confirmation that, where it can be had, none are to be admitted to the holy communion until they are confirmed, or are desirous and ready to be confirmed.

The fate of the applications for an American episcopate has been singular and unprecedented. That an established Church, which gives such ample and liberal toleration to sectaries of every name, should herself not be tolerated, is a phenomenon in political history peculiar to the American world \*. Whilst, without

\* "The want of bishops in America hath been all along the more heavily lamented, because it is a case so singular, that it cannot be paralleled in the Christian world. For, what sect was ever any where at all allowed the worship of God according to their own conscience,



without a murmur, we see dissenters of every denomination enjoying their full rights under their several forms of religious discipline, why should it have given offence that Churchmen have requested to have at least as full an enjoyment of her rights granted to the

“conscience, without being also allowed the means within themselves of providing for the continual exercise of their worship? The granting one without the other would be but a mockery. Yet, such is the state of our Church in the colonies, and at a time and in a realm where the rights of conscience are best understood, and most fully allowed and protected. All sects of Protestant Christians at home, and all, save one, throughout our colonies, have the full enjoyment of their religion. Even the Romish superstition, within a province lately added to the British dominions, is completely allowed in all its parts; it hath bishops. Thus stands the case of all Churches in our colonies, except only the Church here by law established; that alone is not tolerated in the whole; it exists only in a part, in a maimed state, lopt of episcopacy, an essential part of its constitution. And whence this disgraceful distinction? Whence this mark of distrust? What is the fear? What the danger? A few persons vested with authority, to ordain ministers, to confirm youth, and to visit their own clergy. Can two or three persons, restrained to these spiritual functions, be dangerous to any in any matter? in what? or to whom? Can they possibly, so limited, on any pretence whatever, attempt to molest any in their religious concerns? Can they invade the right or jurisdiction of magistrates? Can they infringe the liberties of the people? Can they weaken, or be thought to weaken, the fidelity of the colonies to his Majesty, or their dependence on this country? To these duties, if there be any difference, the members of this Church, as such, are bound by one special motive, besides the motive common to them with all other subjects.”——Bp. Ewer’s Sermon before the Society for propagating the Gospel in Foreign Parts, in 1767, p. 22.

National Church? Of the ministers alone of the Church of England it may be said, that, as ministers, we have no law, and are under no controul. And when this is urged as an argument to make us amenable to the jurisdiction of lay-courts in matters purely spiritual, is it not time to obviate the objection; and time to shew, by petitioning for an episcopate, that we are far from desiring to continue exempt from all jurisdiction? our only aim being, if possible, to obtain a constitutional jurisdiction.

It is possible that, in some future period, the lay persons, whom we hear it is proposed now to invest with such ecclesiastical powers, may not be of the communion of the Church of England; or they may be Low-churchmen. Now, as it is to be hoped that there are in our Order many who do not belong to that denomination, it surely would be hard on High-church delinquents (who, however proscribed by modern patriots, are, happily, not yet proscribed by our laws) have both their judge and jury composed of men decidedly adverse to them. Though such a circumstance should never occur, yet, whenever spiritual persons are liable to be called upon by laymen to answer for spiritual offences, our Church would then no longer be episcopal; but, if any thing, presbyterian. It will be preposterous for us then to say, that the Church of England is the established religion of Virginia.

We are not seldom tauntingly told that the dissenters are daily increasing; and their increase is confidently

confidently imputed to our remissness. That dissenters do increase, and that true religion is sorely wounded and hurt by the wild ravings of numerous enthusiastic preachers, the established Clergy are not so happy as to be ignorant. Much wrong, we acknowledge, is inflicted on our distracted country; and what is worse, it is inflicted without experiencing the animadversions of those who are bound to prevent it. The blame, however, we humbly trust, cannot, without injustice, be all laid at our door. We are not so self-sufficient as to pretend that we do all that is in our power to stop the progress of this increasing evil: and for this, many of us, I know, are (as we all ought to be) exceedingly humbled and sorry. God enable us to do our duty better for the time to come! But whilst we confess and lament our own unworthiness, it is not necessary, nor wise, nor virtuous, to charge ourselves with more unworthiness than really belongs to us. For many reasons it is not in our power to do more than is already done. Our hands are tied up; and we say (and think we could prove \*) that

\* "The proper and only remedy hath long since been pointed out, the appointment of one or more resident bishops for the exercise of offices purely episcopal, in the American Church of England; for administering the solemn and edifying rite of confirmation; for ordaining ministers, and superintending their conduct: offices, to which the members of the Church of England have an undoubted claim, and from which they cannot be precluded without manifest injustice and oppression. The design hath been laid before the public in the most unexceptionable form;



that they can be untied only by granting us an episcopate.

It is a fact well deserving our attention, that both dissenters, and the itinerant preachers, with whom the colony is now over-run, make proselytes chiefly, if not wholly, in parishes that lie long vacant, without any incumbent in them; or where the incumbent is old and infirm, and unequal to the duties of his parish; or, in any other respect, is incompetent to the discharge of his function. If we had a bishop, he would be of great service to the Church in redressing this inconvenience; and he would redress it by means as natural and easy as they would be effectual. More

“form (*a*); it hath been supported against every objection, which unreasonable and indecent opposition hath raised, by arguments unanswerable and unanswerable; unless groundless fears, invidious surmises, injurious suspicions; unless absurd demands of needless and impracticable securities against dangers altogether imaginary and improbable, are to set aside undoubted rights, founded upon the plainest maxims of religious liberty; upon the common claim of mutual toleration, that favourite but abused principle, the glory and the disgrace of Protestantism, which all are forward enough to profess, but few steadily practise; and which those who claim it in the fullest extent for themselves, are sometimes least of all inclined to indulge in any degree to others.”——Bp. Lowth’s Sermon before the Society for propagating the Gospel in Foreign Parts, in 1771.

(*a*) The bishop here alludes to the sundry treatises in behalf of an American episcopate, and, in particular, to “An appeal to the Public,” and “The Appeal defended,” written by my late excellent friend, Dr. Chandler of Elizabeth Town in New Jersey, than which a more temperate, more able, or more Christian *appeal* has not been made to the world since the times of the first apologists of Christianity.”

of our young men would probably be brought up to the Church than is now the case if they could be ordained without the expence and the hazard of a long voyage. They then, after being ordained deacons, might, and no doubt would, (as in point of regularity they always ought,) officiate as deacons for the usual term of three years. During this period, as they could not be inducted into parishes, they might usefully and commendably be employed in assisting lame, sick, or superannuated ministers; or in doing the duty in vacant parishes. For, considering that there are no pluralists among us, and that our incomes are extremely limited, it is not likely that we should ever have curates among us in the same way as they are employed in the Parent State. But were there among us a competent number of young unemployed divines, the people would then no longer have the plea of necessity for resorting to conventicles, or field-preachers \*, from the want of regular teachers in their own parish-churches. Our vestries too, when called on to elect a minister into a vacant parish, would have applications from more candidates, and so have a better chance and opportunity of providing a proper minister. It seems but too certain, that from the discountenance lately shewn to the Church, there are not at present in the colony, Cler-

\* “Inde schismata & hæreses oborta sunt & oriuntur, dum episcopus, qui unus est, & ecclesiæ præ-est, superbâ quorumnam præsumptione, contemnitur: & homo dignatione Dei honoratus, indignus hominibus judicatur.”——Cyprian. Epist. 69.

gymen in point of number nearly equal to the exigencies of the colony.

If the Clergy of this *dominion* be persuaded (as I affirm with confidence we in general are) that the Church of England cannot have the full enjoyment and benefit of her offices, until a bishop be settled among us; if we can make it appear that such an appointment will increase the number of candidates, and thus furnish the country with better means of choosing new ministers; if, relying on the testimony of history, we believe that a bishop will be a great help and encouragement to such Clergymen as are solicitous to discharge the duties of their profession well, and also be a terror to the evil-minded; and if, finally, no inference that can be drawn from any premises be more logical and more fair than it is, that the interests of morality and sound religion will thus be very essentially promoted; we cannot but hope, that no true and intelligent friend to civil and religious liberty will any longer blame us for using all the legal and honourable means in our power to obtain at least a toleration for ourselves and our Church.

If we be asked (as we have been asked) why, if we want reformation, we cannot reform ourselves? To this flippant question I hope it will be a sufficient answer, if, in my turn, I ask another: Why may not, and why do not, mankind in general *live honestly, soberly and godly in the present world*, without laws, and without the aid of civil rulers? If men were as good as they know it is their interest to be, laws and go-



vernors would be unnecessary. But the world is peopled, not with angels, but with men, whose moral conduct has hitherto been found to be most generally influenced by the sanction of rewards and punishments. And in the present state of our nature, it is as necessary that some men should be stimulated to be virtuous as it is that others should be deterred from being vicious. Supposing the seeds of virtue to be sown in the human breast, yet for want of culture they never may sprout forth. Good laws and wise rulers are the only means yet known for cherishing good principles : and therefore to deprive any set of men of either, and much more of both, is (at least as far as those men are concerned) to chill and starve all virtuous principles, as well as to nip in the bud every generous and public-spirited action.

The Church of Christ has been governed by bishops ever since it was a church. And episcopacy has been proved to be the best form of church government, by the experience, not of one or two ages, and one or two countries only, but by the experience of every age, and of all Christendom. To withhold from that sound part of it, the American Church of England, such teachers and such rulers as her very being depends upon, is to withhold from her such undoubted rights as have hitherto been deemed sacred ; and is also offering a most violent outrage to civil liberty. It is, indeed, to un-church the Established Church. Who that is at all acquainted with human nature, would wonder if such treatment should sour the minds  
of

of even the mildest and best of her Clergy, and cool their zeal to do good? And, as if all this was not sufficiently humiliating, they have the additional mortification to see the authors of their wrongs rising on their ruins. The members of every other system of religion enjoy all their rights and privileges to the utmost extent of their wishes: and as some wavering members of the Church of England, through the depression of the Church, forsake her, they also go over to those who have first made our Church low and mean, and then take this advantage of her being so. Hence, the injustice of which we have to complain is both negative and positive. Are we then either unreasonable, assuming, or intolerant, when we speak of such conduct as partial in the extreme; as unwise and unjust; as a perversion of law; an infringement of the Toleration Act; and as an obvious encouragement to dissenters? And what is the policy that dictates such an extraordinary proceeding as the refusing to this whole continent (a large portion of the globe) a regular Church? For what, and for whom, shall the British empire suffer the truly Apostolic Church of England, the great guardian of the Christian Religion, and the bulwark of the Reformation, to be thus persecuted, and trampled on? That our Legislature should endure calmly to look on, whilst so much mischief is doing, without making an effort to prevent it, is a circumstance sufficient to arouse the most torpid: but that they should likewise join in the cry, and lend an helping hand to pull

down the Church, is so portentous a phenomenon in the political world, as to alarm the most careless and secure.

This proposed American episcopate labours under this great disadvantage, that the minds of men are prepossessed and prejudiced against it ; and that they view it through a false medium. Designs are imputed to its advocates, which they utterly disavow : and any general opposition, however disingenuous and illiberal, is rarely without effect. We are called upon to defend what we propose, by answering objections which lie against what we do not propose. Those who have brought us into this dilemma, have not done so without design. They know how much easier it is fairly to meet and reply to a matter of fact, than it is to argue, in an endless round, against suspicions and surmises. Every objection, however unfounded, that bore but the appearance of reason, has been replied to, and obviated, again and again : those of passion and prejudice, groundless conjectures and illiberal suggestions, can be obviated by Him alone who has the hearts of all men in his hands, and can *turn and dispose them as it seemeth best to his godly wisdom.*

It is probable that at least some of the opposers of episcopacy oppose it only because, like Diotrephes, they themselves *love to have the pre-eminence* \*. And it may not perhaps be thought out of character, for those who think it right to oppose the successors of the Apostles to follow the example of him who *prated malicious words* † against the last survivor of the

\* 3 Gen. Epist. St. John, ver. 9.

† Ibid. ver. 10.



Apostles. Be this as it may, as long as such unquiet and restless men continue to *oppose and exalt themselves above all that is called of God*, so long it is the duty of the friends of truth to endeavour to satisfy even those who seem resolved to be satisfied with nothing. This task and this labour we might well have been spared, if those who bring no new arguments would only be so reasonable as to be contented with the old answers given to their predecessors. To the mere declamatory retailers of obsolete and exploded cavils, silence and contempt might perhaps be thought the most suitable reply: but, when men in high stations think it not beneath them to pick up and circulate, under their own authority, not merely weak arguments, but oft-refuted slanders, respect to those who have raised them to these high stations entitles them to a more particular attention. Still, however, let it be recollected, that the sanction and support which great names give to weak arguments, are but temporary, feeble, and delusive. Exalted characters do irreparable injury to their fellow-creatures, when they suffer themselves to be made the vehicles of the misconceptions of the ignorant, or the misrepresentations of the evil-minded. But, whatever may be the weight of error and of vice, when proceeding from the mouth of truth and virtue, still it is the duty of every good Christian, and more especially the duty of us, who are the ministers of the gospel, to resist both the open attacks and the secret machinations of our adversaries. Admirable is the advice of the Son of Sirach on such

occasions : *Observe the opportunity, and beware of evil ; and be not ashamed when it concerneth thy soul. For, there is a shame which bringeth sin, and there is a shame which is glory and grace. And refrain not to speak when there is occasion to do good, and hide not thy wisdom. Make not thyself an underling to a foolish man, neither accept the person of the mighty. Strive for the truth unto death, and the Lord shall fight for thee\*.*

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No man can ever address an audience with greater confidence of being listened to with candour, than I now do. I have lived among you now more than seven years, as your minister, in such harmony as to have had no disagreement with any man even for a day. This has made such an impression of esteem and affection on my mind, as no time can efface. Conscious that I have never taught you any doctrine of the truth of which I was not myself well convinced, I am sure you will give me all the attention I can deserve. But, we now have among us persons with whom I have not the happiness to be so intimately connected ; persons brought hither by your flattering partiality to me, to hear this particular subject fully argued and discussed ; persons who, it is probable, know me only as a reputed high-churchman, and the enemy of sects and sectaries. From such persons, however respectable they may be in other points of

\* Ecclus. ch. iv. ver. 20.

view, it would be romantic in me to look for any such indulgence as I am in the habit of receiving from you. I feel myself much obliged to them for the patience and decency with which they listened to me last Sunday. But, though it be no more than I might have expected, I must confess, I am hurt and mortified by hearing, that they have been disappointed in my doctrine. They complain (and with some shew of reason) that I did not, as they expected I would have done, set out with first proving the divine authority of episcopacy : nor are there wanting some who insinuate, that it's having any such authority is a doctrine incapable of proof. I am happy, therefore, in thus having an opportunity of giving a fuller, and, if I can, a more satisfactory answer to these other doubts, of which I have now been first informed. To many of you, it is to be feared, the argument may appear uninteresting and tedious : but, a general topic of conversation as the subject is now become, among people of all ranks and characters, it would be with some reason I should be suspected of consulting my own feelings only, were I now to shrink from it. Bear with me, then, whilst, as concisely as I can, I first give you the outlines (the time will not admit of more) of the proofs most usually adduced in favour of the divine authority of episcopacy : after which I will close the subject with a reply to each of the most material objections which have been urged by the protesters.

The first institution of government in the Church



was when the Founder of the Church chose and appointed twelve Apostles. *He ordained them* (saith St. Mark) that they should be with him, and that *he might send them forth to preach*. As it was the practice of our Saviour to adopt, and (in every instance where he could with propriety) give his sanction to, Jewish ideas and customs, it is more than probable, that in this formation of a system of Church Establishment he adopted the polity of the Jewish Church. Thus, corresponding with the high-priest, priests, and Levites, were, at first, Christ, apostles, and disciples; and afterwards, apostles, (or bishops,) priests, and deacons. Whilst Christ was on earth, he alone ordained or made apostles and disciples; but, before his ascension, he gave to the Apostles, then with him, the power to ordain or make other apostles and disciples. They planted churches, and ordained bishops to preside over them: such bishops were stationary; and had power also given them to appoint inferior officers, as priests and deacons. The name of apostle died with the Apostles, but not the office. That remained with the bishop, who was the chief ruler or overseer. To him also was reserved the power of ordination and confirmation; priests and deacons having authority only to preach and to baptise: to the priests also, but not to deacons, was allotted the power of absolution. But the three regular stated orders in the Church, from the beginning, were bishops, priests, and deacons.

It is probable, moreover, that Christ gave to the  
persons

persons of his first and highest choice the name of *apostles*, not for any reasons of his own devising, but in allusion, or reference, to a similar institution among the Jewish high-priests; who also had a peculiar kind of ministers, whom they called apostles. These they employed in instructing the priests; in visiting the several synagogues; and in reproofing a degeneracy of manners, and in reforming, from time to time, such ministers as might be found deviating from the express injunctions of the law \*. This system bears so near a resemblance to the office of an *apostle*, as constituted by our Saviour, that it is natural to think, the one might be copied from the other. I am persuaded, it's resemblance to the office of a primitive bishop will be no less obvious to you.

To others (as for instance to the seventy Disciples) Christ, at their first institution, assigned particular precincts and limits: but, his commission to the Apostles was bounded only by the boundaries of the world. *Go ye*, (said he to them, just before his ascension,) *go ye into ALL THE WORLD; and preach the gospel to every creature: as the Father hath sent me, even so send I you.* When a certain end is enjoined, it is always to be understood, that the means necessary for the attainment of that end are also enjoined. This text, therefore, warranted the Apostles to conceive, that they were authorised and empowered not

\* "Quos etiam ipse legare consueverat ad componendos optimos sacerdotum mores, ipsas synagogas inspiciendas, pravos mores corrigendos, &c." — Baronii Annales, A. 32. § 5.

only, themselves, to order and rule the flock of Christ ; but also to ordain and constitute such coadjutors and successors, as they should find necessary to perform the several offices in his Church, until his second coming. They conceived themselves, in particular, authorised to institute and ordain two distinct orders of ministers ; the one subordinate to the other, just as the Disciples were subordinate to them. They understood that the import of their commission was as if Christ had said : As I received power from my Father to institute ministers of divers orders for the government of my Church, so do I give it you. Whatever, therefore, the Apostles did in the appointment of ministers, they did after the example, and by the authority, of Christ. Consequently, the imparity of ministers by them ordained was founded on the law of God, and the original institution of our Saviour ; who gave them the power of ordination as they have given it to their successors for ever.

When Christ first instituted apostles, the condition was, that the person so to be constituted should be immediately called by Christ himself ; and have been an eye-witness of the things which it became his duty afterwards to preach and publish concerning Christ. These requisites an apostle had, in common with a disciple : but, in the extent of his commission, and the eminence of his authority, he was superior to a disciple. In the circumstance of being entrusted with a part of the sacred ministry, disciples were equal to bishops ; yet certainly not equal in authority  
and



and supremacy \*. And as, in naming and fixing the number of apostles, our Saviour saw fit to conform to a similar system established among the Jews, he appears to have done the same in the number of his chosen and ordained disciples. He appointed *seventy*, because just that number (as appears from Numbers †,) were appointed to govern the tribes of Israel ‡.

And now the Apostles having thus been empowered by Christ to preach his gospel *over all the world to every creature, he was parted from them, and carried up to heaven*: first commanding them *to tarry in the city of Jerusalem, until they were endued with power from on high*. When he had spoken these things, *while they beheld, he was taken up, and a cloud received him out of their sight*. On this the Apostles, obedient to his mandate, went to Jerusalem: and there the first public act they performed was to fill up their own number, by surrogating one of the Disciples into the place of Judas; whose *office or bishopric*, it had long ago been foretold, *another was to take* §. Mat-

\* “Lucâ testante duodecim fuisse Apostolos, & septuaginta Discipulos *minoris gradûs*.”—Sanct. Jerom. Tract. ad Fabiolam.  
 . . . . . “qui *secundo* ab Apostolis gradu.”—Sanct. Ambros.  
 . . . . . “*υποδεξαιο ησαν των δωδεκα*.”—Theophylact. in Luc. 10.  
 . . . . . “Etiam septuaginta Discipuli, quos *secundo* ab Apostolis loco Dominus designavit.”—Calvin. in Institut. l. 4. c. 3. § 4.

† Ch. xi. ver. 16.

‡ “In numero *septuaginta* videtur eum ordinem secutum esse, cui jam olim assueverat populus.”—Calvin. in Harmon. Evangel.

§ See Psalm cix. ver. 8. and Acts ch. i. ver. 20.

thias,

thias, heretofore one of the seventy, was now *numbered with the eleven Apostles*. And now it farther pleased God to make good his promise, and they were all miraculously *filled with the Holy Ghost*. Every one, whether apostle or disciple, no doubt, had such a gift, and such a portion, as his particular office and destination required. Unto one was given by the Spirit the word of wisdom ; to another, the word of knowledge ; and *to another, the gift of healing, by the same Spirit ; to another, the working of miracles ; to another, prophecy ; to another, discerning of spirits ; to another, divers tongues ; to another, the interpretation of tongues*. They all had their several gifts ; but the Apostles had them all. Whatever, for the advancement of God's glory, was divided among all the rest, was all concentrated in the person of each apostle ; all of them thus becoming as superior in gifts and graces as they had before been in rank and station. Out of the hundred and twenty then assembled together, some were made evangelists, some prophets, and some pastors, presbyters, and teachers : but the Apostles still retained their superiority ; and ordered and directed them all in their respective missions and duties. Timothy and Titus, who were evangelists, were deputed by Paul, as the exigencies of the Church required, first from Asia to Greece, then back to Asia, and thence to Italy. Crescens was sent to Galatia, Titus to Dalmatia, and Tychicus to Ephesus : Erastus was ordered to abide at Corinth ; and Luke ministered with the apostle Paul at Rome. There are so many particular

particular directions respecting the various use of the various talents of the teachers of the gospel in the xivth chapter of the 1st epistle to the Corinthians, that we might almost call it the first (as it certainly is the best) episcopal charge that ever was delivered. St. Paul did what (no doubt) all his successors aim to do in such charges. He pointed out the errors, and corrected the abuses, which had crept into the establishment. Those who had the *gift of prophecy*, and those who had the *gift of tongues*, were exhorted no longer to interfere with, and *confuse*, one another, without at all profiting their hearers; but so to use their various talents, that by each the Church might be edified.

There is no little difficulty and obscurity in tracing the history of St. John, the last survivor of *the glorious company of the Apostles*. Eusebius, from Origen, doubtful of other allegations, concludes this only to be certain, that at last he went down into Asia, and there preached the gospel; planting many churches, and also founding sundry bishoprics. He founded, partly, if not entirely, all the seven churches, to which he wrote his Revelations, excepting that of Ephesus. And as to Ephesus, though he came too late to plant he was not too late to water it. This church, being much weakened by the forceries of Apollonius Tyanæus, and also by the heresies of Ebion and Cerinthus, was in great want of an authoritative interference. And St. John interfered so effectually, that Ignatius, his co-temporary, joins him with Paul and Timothy as the co-founder of that church.

Whilst



Whilst he was in the midst of his course, he was, in the year 92, sent prisoner to Rome, and from thence to Patmos; and there confined till the death of Domitian in the year 99: during which time he wrote *The Revelations*. At the request of these seven churches also it is most probable he wrote the Gospel which bears his name.

To counteract the poisonous doctrines of those *false teachers*, who had *crept in* among these churches; and whose influence was so great, that many had begun to stagger in their faith, he addresses his Apocalypse to *the seven churches which are in Asia*. The errors and defections were general: it was proper, therefore, that the correction of them should be general. But, when he comes to particulars, to give every one of them it's own specific charge, on the authority of him *the great Shepherd and Bishop of our souls*, who *walketh\* in the midst of the golden candlesticks*, he addresses himself only to the *angels*. Now these *angels* (a term which, in its primary import, corresponds with *apostles*) according to the concur-

\* "This is an expression taken from the office of the priests in dressing the lamps, which were to be kept always burning before the Lord. I conceive, therefore, *walking* here may be designed to signify not only a care to observe and know the true state of the churches; but moreover to assist and promote their improvement in religion; or to assist the churches in their proper character as consecrated to the service of God, that they may shine as lights in the world, in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation."—Lowman on the Revelations of St. John.

ring testimony of many esteemed authors, both ancient and modern, were the *bishops* of those several churches. And this is so clear and certain, that the names of these respective bishops have been ascertained.

To these *angels*, or bishops, persons regularly invested with similar power and authority regularly succeeded. And it is not impossible but that, by a diligent search, their successors might all be traced : since the church of Laodicea, which was in most danger of losing it's candlestick, had a constant and continual succession of bishops, to the Council of Nice, and a long time after. In the Nicene Council we find the several *angels*, or bishops of these *seven churches*, among other bishops of the times, subscribing their names to the acts of the council.

That such was the original institution of episcopacy is unquestionable : and it is no less certain, that the power then given to the persons first invested with the episcopal character, was intended to be, and was made, perpetual. This is implied in St. Paul's solemn charge to Timothy, the bishop of Ephesus ; made bishop, according to the early fathers, by Paul himself. *I charge thee, in the sight of God, and before Jesus Christ, that thou keep this commandment without spot, unrebukable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ.* Now, it was impossible that Timothy should live till Christ's second coming. This the Apostle knew ; and therefore the charge and power here given to Timothy, and which were perfectly episcopal, could not be personal only ; but such as he and his successors

cessors might enjoy *until the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ*; that is, in other words, as long as the world endured.

Even the name of bishops is primitive and apostolical; being given to the persons invested with the office, by an Apostle. In a passage, which particularly mentions them\*, our translators have rendered the word *overseers*† agreeably to it's literal import. If, sometimes, in the Scriptures, we find the word applied to an ordinary *presbyter*, it is at such times and in such places only when, there being no bishops properly so called established over them, such presbyters had the chief governance of some flock, or body of Christians, under the Apostles. The signification

\* Acts xi. 28.

† It may not, perhaps, be thought incurious to observe on this term Ἐπίσκοπος, in this passage, that, in the German, Danish, and Swedish versions, it is rendered by a word which in their respective languages corresponds exactly with our word *bishop*: in the Dutch only it is *opfinders*, a term that is, no less exactly, the *overseers* of our translation.

The officers of the Athenians sent to *look into* the government of their cities, were also called *bishops*: οἱ δ' ἐπίσκοποι καὶ φύλακες ἐκαλεῖτο. Suidas, sub voce. Plutarch calls Numa, Ἐπίσκοπον, the bishop, or guardian, of the Vestal virgins; and their god Terminus, Ἐπίσκοπον καὶ φύλακα φιλίας καὶ εἰρήνης, the overseer, bishop, or preserver, of peace and amity. Other Greek writers use it in the same sense; as do also some Latin authors; as “Vult me *episcopum* esse,” &c. Cicero ad Atticum, l. 7.

“Græcum enim est, atque inde ductum, vocabulum; quod ille qui præficitur, eis quibus præficitur, *superintendit*.”—St. August. De Civitate Dei, l. 19. c. 19.



of the word presbyter is very general. Every bishop was a presbyter, though every presbyter was not a bishop.

Had we an opportunity carefully to go through a series of the ecclesiastical history of the first century, the result would be, that we should find that apostles were first appointed by our Saviour, and succeeded by bishops, to whom the government of the Church was committed \*. James was bishop of Jerusalem; Peter, of Antioch, and afterwards of Rome; St. Mark, of Alexandria; Timothy, of Ephesus; Titus, of Crete; Archippus, of the Colossians; Epaphroditus, of the Philippians; Polycarp, of Smyrna; and St. John, of Ephesus, where he died in a good old age. At his death, he left the Church not only firmly grounded in the true faith, but also well settled in its outward government, polity, and administration; framed by the Apostles, after the example and pattern of their Lord and Master. For since the Church was born of seed immortal, and the Apostles, though men most excellent and divine, were still but mortal, it was of essential moment to her interests, that she should also be secure of a perpetuity (or, if I may so speak, of an immortality) of *overseers*. Instructed as the Apostles were by Christ and the Holy Ghost in the faith which they were directed to preach, they

\* “Habemus annumerare eos, qui ab Apostolis instituti sunt episcopi in ecclesiis, & successores eorum usque ad nos.”—Iren. lib. iii. cap. 3.

were no less instructed in that form of government which they were ordered to institute. Had this not been the case, it can hardly be imagined that they ever could so unanimously have concurred in the self-same form and model : and had the Church not been a scion of God's own planting, it is scarcely credible that, under so many inauspicious circumstances, he would have blessed it with a growth almost miraculous.

If it were in my power, it does not seem necessary on this occasion, to go more minutely through the early history of episcopacy, and to ascertain the see or seat of every individual bishop. The whole current of antiquity runs so clearly and so strongly in favour of episcopacy being the first, the apostolical, the divinely-settled form of church government, that whosoever has the rashness to attempt to disturb or trouble the stream, must needs corrupt the fountain. As apostles, those made such by our Saviour had no successors : but as bishops, the tables of succession are as clear, as distinct, and as authentic, as are those of the Roman emperors, or British kings. Bishops succeeded the Apostles ; their name only, and not their office, being changed : the chief difference was, that the commission to the Apostles was unlimited, whereas bishops presided only in particular districts.

No one who is a believer in revelation has ever pretended to deny that the Apostles preached the gospel and performed the other parts of the apostolical office under the sanction of divine authority. All  
that

that can possibly be disputed is, whether such authority died with them, or whether Christ gave them power to ordain others successively to the end of time to the same office. If they had not such power, it will follow, that all succeeding Orders of men in the Church have been merely of human institution, and so have *ruled in their own kingdom, and not in that of Jesus Christ*; for there can be no just and regular power in any society, which is not derived from the person or persons who preside over that society. Our argument is, that the Apostles were empowered to perform the offices, among other reasons, expressly and chiefly that they might empower others. To suppose that this was not the case, is to suppose that the nature of Christ's kingdom here upon earth, with respect to it's external polity or government, is necessarily so unstable, and so continually liable to alterations, that, instead of an institution of order, and such an one as, in the prophetic style, has been called *the perfection of beauty*, it would appear, of all the known constitutions in the world, the least reconcileable with the character of a wise legislator.

We, who are episcopalians, assume the certainty of an uninterrupted succession as a point already proved: we assert it as a fact, that the Order of bishops is derived in a continual succession from Christ: and it is incumbent on those, who are disposed to dispute this fact, to shew when and on what occasion this succession was ever broken. For, though in cases of mere argumentation, it is a common maxim, that the proof



lies upon him who affirms; yet, in a point of fact where the party attacked is in possession of that to which he alledges he has a just right and title, the party who opposes his title is to shew in what respects and on what account it is deficient. But we are not contented merely to assert as a fact, that we have an uninterrupted succession: it has been proved again and again, to the silencing at least, if not to the satisfaction, of our adversaries; and we insist that the nature of Christ's kingdom requires that the succession of his ministers, in things pertaining to God, could not consistently have been otherwise. For if the succession (of which he is the head and fountain) be once broken, by what authority could it have been renewed, or again conveyed to us, without some special and immediate interposition of its Founder?

The function of bishops is not only apostolical, but it alone is apostolical. That it is the best form of government for the Church, may be inferred from it's having not only the warrant of Scripture for it's first institution, but also the constant practice of the Church for it's continuance from the age of the Apostles to this day. As strong, however, as the authority is on which this declaration is founded, God forbid that I should take upon me to assert, that the salvation of Christian people depends entirely on the lawful calling of their ministers! but it is so far my duty to remind you, that it much imports us all to consider, how far any of the ordinances or even sacraments of religion can be duly administered without a valid ministry,

ministry, and especially in times and places where it is not utterly impossible to obtain a valid ministry. The twenty-third Article of our Church says no more than the Scriptures will warrant, and fair argument may defend, when it asserts that "it is not lawful for any man to take upon him the office of public preaching, or ministering the sacraments in the congregation, before he be lawfully called and sent to execute the same. And those we ought to judge lawfully called and sent, which be chosen and called to this work by men which have public authority given unto them in the congregation, to call and send ministers into the Lord's vineyard."

I now, at length, come to the particular objections of the protesters, and their immediate advocates. And as it has been objected to me that in my former discourse I did not give them all the consideration to which they were thought to be entitled, every argument that appears to be at all relevant, or of any weight, shall now certainly be attended to with all becoming respect.

First, then, it is objected, that the proposed episcopate will include a jurisdiction over other colonies. To this it is answered, that, if it does, it will only be because the Clergy of other colonies have desired to be so included. And it should be remembered, that in no colony will it include any but the Clergy of the Church of England. Nevertheless, if either the

Clergy of other colonies, or the King, shall see fit, it may include only this colony.

The next objection is, that an episcopate is contrary to the natural rights and fundamental laws of the colonies. We call upon our opponents to specify the instances or cases in which an episcopate can or will infringe on any rights or laws whatever, natural or chartered. This, we are confident, it is not in their power to do; but, till it is done, we can only reply in general, that it is a malicious suspicion, utterly void of all probability. A flat denial is not, we trust, an improper reply to an unproved assertion. After asserting then, again, that this surmise is totally unfounded, and indeed impossible to be true, we must beg leave once more to repeat, that all we aim at is an episcopate purely primitive; with jurisdiction only over the Clergy, and not clogged with civil power of any kind. And as we have been led to think that this will be more agreeable to the Laity of all the colonies, so we hope it will be more serviceable to religion.

A third objection is, that it is an attempt to withdraw ourselves from our ancient jurisdiction in ecclesiastical matters. If it be, it is only to place ourselves under one that is more ancient, more constitutional, and better adapted to our situation: which yet we shall not do without the consent and entire approbation of that jurisdiction which the objectors are pleased to call ancient,

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This answer, as it is direct, we cannot but think a sufficient one. But, that we may not pass unnoticed even the shadow of an argument, let us for a moment enquire what this ancient jurisdiction has been. George the First granted a commission, which was renewed by George the Second, to the bishop of London, to put the Clergy of the Church of England in America under the jurisdiction of the said bishop. Till then they had been annexed to no particular diocese. This commission empowered the bishop, either in his own person, or by his commissaries, to visit the Clergy, to call them before him, to hear witnesses against them, and to inflict various degrees of ecclesiastical censures upon them, such as suspension, removal, and excommunication. It not only confers those powers for governing the Clergy, but restrains the bishop from concerning himself with any other persons whatever: and it claims to the king the power of doing all this, by virtue of his being head of the church in America. In consequence of this, the bishop's commissary here has held courts in this dominion, which consisted of himself and four clergymen, agreeably to the constitutions of the Church of England. From this court there was an appeal to his majesty's privy-council in England; and that also accorded with the established modes of proceeding in our civil courts. Now, this being the state of our *ancient jurisdiction*, it is evident, on a comparison of it with the proposed episcopate, that the king is not now desired to grant more than in fact his royal

grandfather and great-grandfather have heretofore granted. For, where is the difference between granting certain powers to the bishop of London, and granting the same powers to an American bishop; excepting that, in granting them to the latter, they will be granted to the person best able to carry them into execution, as acting in his own person, and not through the mediation of commissaries, who will then become unnecessary? As far as I know, it has never been said, or even suspected, that the bishop of London, or any of his commissaries, have exceeded their commission: and yet (I mention it with shame and concern) there have been governors so little acquainted either with their interest or their duty, as to encourage the people to discountenance and discredit commissaries.

The lay part of the community can have no good motives for wishing the government of the Clergy, in spiritual and ecclesiastical matters, in lay hands. And it is unnatural to suppose, that Clergymen in general should differ so totally from their fellow-citizens as not to be anxious, in case of spiritual offences, to be tried by spiritual men: because none but spiritual persons are their peers. Such a government alone is uniform and consistent with the most ancient and the only ecclesiastical establishment for governing the Clergy, as Clergymen, that ever yet took place in Virginia. The bishop of London had no jurisdiction here till it was given him by the commission above-mentioned: and as it has not been renewed since the death

death of bishop Gibson, the bishop of London no longer has any jurisdiction in America; and if he has not, it will hardly be thought that any other bishop has. There is, then, at present, no jurisdiction over the Clergy of Virginia, as Clergymen. The question in debate, therefore, comes to this: Is it decent, is it fit, that Clergymen alone should be without a head, and under no constitutional controul? I might almost venture to leave it to our opponents themselves to answer this question. Even anti-episcopalians can neither be so ignorant, nor so unreasonable, as to say it is either decent or proper that so considerable a body of men, of some weight in the community, should remain *without guide, overseer, or ruler*. We entreat, then, to be permitted, uncensured and unopposed, to prefer a government instituted in quiet times under such kings as the two first Georges, and to think it a better pattern and precedent in this juncture than commissions granted in unsettled times and on extraordinary occasions; or than a novel scheme, which is to be introduced now, in times peculiarly loose and disorderly.

Another objection is, that the proposed episcopate is an attack upon religious liberty. Of all the groundless suspicions which have been so intemperately indulged against this measure, this is the last of which it's friends could ever have thought. The opposition to it is, in their estimation, the only real attack upon religious liberty now existing in the British dominions. The advocates for it are fully persuaded, that episcopacy



copacy is an apostolical institution : and I would fain flatter myself, that even the unmethodical arguments suggested to you in it's behalf in these two discourses may induce you to think the cause is such an one as called for our zeal, and that therefore the Clergy did not engage in it without reason. We are not to learn that the defenders of Calvinistical establishments maintain the other side of the question. Now, as neither they, nor we, acknowledge any infallible judge of controversy, we neither of us have any right to determine the point for the other. Religious liberty does not consist in settling nice and difficult points ; such as, too probably, in the present imperfect state of religious knowledge, never will be settled to the entire satisfaction of all parties. Religious liberty, as far as it concerns the present question, consists in this, that they who maintain bishops to be of apostolical institution should have their bishops, and that they who maintain the same of presbyters should have their presbyteries. But if any dissenters will be so unreasonable (I add, so intolerant) as to call the exercise of our right an infringement on theirs ; if they will maintain that we cannot be allowed the reasonable enjoyments of liberty, without subjecting others to unreasonable restraints, we may (and shall) indeed lament their want of wisdom, of candour, and of charity ; but we shall at the same time feel this pleasing conviction, that we never have nor ever shall deny that Christian freedom to others which we now claim for ourselves. Having done all we can to convince them, that  
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though we are benefited, they cannot be injured unless our good be their evil \* ; all that remains for us now is steadily and quietly to go on, and do our own duty, without heeding their interruption any otherwise than by endeavouring to remove their prejudices, and praying to God to *give them a better mind*.

All that has been, or will be, solicited by us, is a primitive bishop; a bishop without power of any kind, excepting in what relates to the Clergy. Shew us any scheme of church government in the world so moderate. There is no more connexion between episcopacy and tyranny, than there is between independency or any other popular scheme of religion and liberty. Tyranny of all kinds, whether civil or religious, springs not so much from the office, as it does from the man in office: and for that reason, the favourers of episcopacy, considering that their bishops must be men, have been at no common pains to have them guarded as much as possible against even possible abuses; and against being suspected only of tyranny in the exercise of their office.

The remaining objections are so miscellaneous and vague, have so little solidity and so much declamation, are so well calculated to inflame, and so ill calculated to inform and convince, and (to say all in few words)

\* “ Mali, cum injuriam facere non sinuntur, injuriam se accipere existimant.” — Grotius in Matt. viii. 29.

are so entirely framed in the spirit and style of modern popular oratory, that I feel myself at a loss how, in a serious discourse, to notice them with propriety.

Among many other equally random surmises, one is, that the Clergy aim, by an episcopate, to detach themselves from the rest of the community. Never was a conjecture hazarded with less semblance of probability. Who knows so little as not to know that, if the superintending government, for which we now petition, should be granted, we should, in civil matters, be still as amenable as we now are to civil jurisdiction? We desire a regular, a constitutional, an ecclesiastical establishment over us, not because we think ourselves less punishable, but because we know we ought to be more within the reach of the law than the rest of the community. And, if I mistake not, this is conformable to the principle of the penal statute against vice and blasphemy, passed in the 4th year of queen Anne; and in which is this clause: "Provided always, that nothing herein contained shall be construed to exempt any Clergyman within this colony, who shall be guilty of any of the crimes herein before mentioned, from such further punishment as might have been inflicted on him for the same before the making of this act, any thing herein contained to the contrary notwithstanding." In short, so far from aiming to detach ourselves from the rest of the community, in the sense intended by the objectors, we desire not only to remain under  
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the jurisdiction of the laws of the land in our civil capacity ; but, besides this, to be under the jurisdiction of an ecclesiastical court as clergymen.

As though the objections hitherto mentioned were not sufficiently futile, we have yet to add, that it has also been sometimes alledged that sufficient security is not offered for the continuance of the rights of the people, civil and religious, if the episcopate takes place. In no other instance, I believe, was such a security against contingencies, which are improbable, if not impossible, ever provided. More than we have already done, and still propose to do, to quiet even these unreasonable fears, seems hardly possible. I can hardly expect you to believe that I am in earnest, when I recite to you, in the very words of the petition of the Clergy, the only kind of bishop that has ever been desired, which, however, is the only ground we have given for all these alarming apprehensions :  
“ Bishops in America are to have no other authority,  
“ but such as is of a purely spiritual and ecclesiastical  
“ nature ; such as is derived from the Church, and  
“ not from the State ; which is to operate only upon  
“ the Clergy of the Church, and not on the  
“ Laity. They are not to interfere with the pro-  
“ perty or privilege, whether civil or religious, of  
“ Churchmen and Dissenters ; are only to exercise  
“ the original duties of their office, i. e. to ordain,  
“ to govern the clergy, and to administer confir-  
“ mation.”

American bishops then, you see, are to be of the  
suffragan

suffragan kind ; without peerages, without power, without preferment. All such appendages to the episcopal character are out of the question : neither the constitution nor the circumstances of the Church in America will admit of them. But even were it otherwise, why all this alarm and outcry ? In England, prelatical power has never been objected to, except by those who meant to destroy it ; and even such persons wished it destroyed, only because it was thought to stand in the way of their ultimate purpose to destroy the State. On the Restoration, the prudent statesmen of that day, (who, in addition to all the information that may be derived from theory, which we possess, had the farther advantage of a recent personal experience,) judged it to be their wisdom and their duty, along with monarchy, to restore episcopacy. And they still think of it so differently from the present leading people of the colonies, that many of the most judicious friends of the Constitution have thought, and continue to think, so modest an hierarchy is a great ornament and advantage to England. One of the most learned men that either England or any other country ever produced, ascribed the superiority of the Divines of the Church of England over all others in point of learning (a superiority that has been very generally acknowledged) entirely to this circumstance : “ It is this part of our establishment (he says) which makes our Clergy excel those of other parts of the world. Do but once level our preferments, and we shall soon be as level in our  
 “ learn-

“learning \*.” Instead, then, of considering great church preferments as scare-crows and bugbears, (as we are here taught to do by our too officious brethren who are not within the pale of our Church,) we should act wisely in founding and endowing them merely as an encouragement to learning. In this country they could not but have the happiest effects: and if they were to operate as an inducement to persons of some condition to breed their younger sons occasionally to the Church, I am sure they would no less benefit the Community at large than the Church itself. And here let me not be thought either selfish or vain if (as the opportunity has offered) I take the liberty to suggest that the efforts of the present American Clergy (who are not, in general, natives of America) to promote a measure which is likely to bring more natives into the Church, must be allowed to be creditable to their disinterestedness and their candour.

I wish that the protesters, and their friends, for their own sakes, as well as for the sake of the country, had suffered their second thoughts to have restrained them from giving way to that idlest of all idle fears,—that the arrival of a bishop may kindle such a flame as may possibly put a period to the British empire in America †. The bare possibility of such an event is  
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\* Dr. Bentley in his *Phileleutherus Lipfienfis*.

† Expressions of this kind, though used only, as it seemed at the time, merely as rhetorical flourishes, were far too common among  
public



an awful consideration. But, in the name of common sense, how or why should this be the case? Why should all America be thrown into such a state of alarm, merely to oppose a man, who is neither desired nor expected to come with any other powers than such as have long been exercised by commissaries, and have been experienced to be perfectly harmless: who comes with authority to punish none but Clergymen, at whose desire he comes; nor any Clergymen but such as a competent number of their own brethren shall have adjudged to deserve punishment? How much more is meant, or may be affected, by this insinuation, than is obvious on the face of it, is best known to those who first threw it out. But, I hope, for the honour of America, it will require more firebrands to kindle such a flame, than even the adversaries of episcopacy (numerous and inveterate as they are, and few and languid as are it's friends \*) can furnish.

And

public men in America. Every law which they did not like, was called *unconstitutional, oppressive, tyrannical*; the people (it was said) were treated as *slaves*; *liberty was destroyed*, and the *government at an end*. It was thus that the people were gradually trained to regard their governors as despots, and even laws as mere arbitrary decrees. And now that the effect of such licentious use of language is so clearly seen, it is fair to infer, that these were deliberate *madmen*, who thus, with malice aforethought, cast around them *fire-brands, arrows, and death*.

\* Lord Clarendon mentions it as an observation (I think) of

And now, after all this long and wearisome opposition, begun without reason, and carried on without charity ; after so many fair and full answers to every objection which seemed to have any weight in it ; may we not (at length) have leave to hope, that the controversy will be closed forever ? May we not flatter ourselves that we shall be permitted to pursue our own concerns at least without molestation, if it be too much to promise ourselves that they who pass by will bid us *God speed*. We are not ashamed to confess that we are sick of the controversy, (not, as we are bold to avow, from it's having been in any respect disreputable to us, but) because we see with sorrow that it is to be determined, not by it's own merits, but by the supposed merits or demerits of those who oppose or patronize it.

If the request were not hopeless, from it's being of the nature of party to be deaf and blind to every purpose which does not coincide with it's own views, we would yet entreat that this question at least might no longer be made a party question ; because, in itself, it certainly has no concern with party ; or, if it had, the persons by whom alone it is supported are the least of all others party-men. Trusting entirely to the merits of our cause, we have hitherto neither sought nor found any party support ; of which con-

Lord Falkland's, that, in his time, "those who hated bishops, "hated them worse than the devil ; whilst those who loved them, "did not love them so well as their dinners."

duct the worst that can be said is that it is a want of policy. It is far from being a solitary instance, in which a good measure, supported by good men, has been lost, merely because the policy of supporting it by party-means was either disapproved of or neglected. But what a reflection is this on the justice and the candour of those by whom the world is contented to be led! If, however, these men of warm spirits, of whom chiefly our parties are composed, mortified or offended by our neither soliciting their patronage nor promoting their views, refuse to listen to our request, which, in our estimation, is as reasonable as it is earnest, our fate is determined: the leading parties in America will continue to misunderstand, misrepresent, vilify and thwart both the measure and its advocates; and Government at home, by a most impolitic and dangerous timidity, will continue to yield to their seditious clamour what they refuse to our loyal reason.

Discouraging, however, as appearances are, it may yet please God, by ways and means of his own, to brighten our prospects, and to bring a measure intended to promote his glory and the good of his creatures to an happy issue. Let us hope, then, that \*  
“by the mercy of God, and the continuance of our  
“labours, our efforts may be brought unto such a  
“conclusion, as that we may have great hope the  
“Church of England shall reap great fruit thereby.

\* See the excellent Epistle Dedicatory by the Translators of the Bible to James the First.



“ And let us also hope, that though things of this  
“ quality have ever been subject to the censures of  
“ ill-meaning and discontented persons, they may  
“ receive approbation and patronage from the learn-  
“ ed and judicious. And the allowance and accept-  
“ ance of our labours by such persons should more  
“ honour and encourage us, than all the calumni-  
“ ations and hard interpretations of other men should  
“ dismay us. So that if we shall be traduced, be-  
“ cause we are poor instruments to make God’s holy  
“ truth to be yet more and more known unto the  
“ people ; or shall be maligned by self-conceited  
“ brethren, who run their own ways, and give liking  
“ unto nothing but what is framed by themselves,  
“ and hammered on their anvil ; we may rest secure,  
“ supported within by the truth and innocency of a  
“ good conscience, having walked the ways of sim-  
“ plicity and integrity before the Lord ; and sustained  
“ without by the powerful protection of all unbiaſſed  
“ and unprejudiced men, who will ever give coun-  
“ tenance to honest and Christian endeavours against  
“ bitter censures and uncharitable imputations.”

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#### A P P E N D I X.

It is very probable that this ample discussion of the arguments for and against a question now become obsolete and nearly forgotten, may, to many readers,

appear dry and tedious. As, however, the subject was certainly connected with and had an influence on the great events which soon after took place in the country where it was most agitated, it could not well be omitted in a series of sermons (or, as perhaps I might now with more propriety call them, a collection of tracts) intended to illustrate the principles and the history of the American revolution.

When it is considered who and what the writers have been who have yet attempted the history of that extraordinary event, it will no longer appear surprising that no notice has been taken of this controversy. It exhibits the temper, the principles, and the spirit of the prevailing party, in such a point of view, as (however their advocates may still secretly approve of) it is no part of their policy now to bring forward.

Persons who were resident in America, and careful observers of what was passing, may recollect, that just before the late rupture this dispute made no inconsiderable part of the history of the times. It was not thought beneath the notice of the author of the Confessional, archbishop Secker, and other eminent writers in England : in the northern provinces of America, it had long been keenly controverted : and about the time that this sermon was delivered, it was agitated in the news-papers of Virginia and Maryland, with hardly less exertion of talents than had just before been called forth by the Stamp-act. Of this controversy this sermon may be considered as a kind of epitome : and though written by an episcopalian, I am  
not

not conscious that any injustice is done either to the anti-episcopalians, or to their arguments.

It is fair to mention, that many wise and good men, friends both to Church and State, thought at the time that the opponents of episcopacy became of consequence, chiefly through the attention paid to them by it's friends. But the event has shewn that the oppositions of men of such principles (whatever be their nature or professed object) are never unmeaning nor insignificant.

For we shall form a very inadequate and imperfect idea of that system of opposition, which has been imperceptibly suffered so to attach and fasten itself to our Constitution as almost to have become a part of it, (—yet surely no otherwise a part of it than as that congeries of shell-fish called barnacles, which, adhering to the bottom of a ship, always impede and retard her course, and at length destroy her, can be called a part of the ship,) if we judge of it from any or from all the particular points against which their opposition is directed. It by no means follows that episcopacy was thus opposed from it's having been thought by these trans-Atlantic oppositionists as in any respect in itself proper to be opposed : but it served to keep the public mind in a state of ferment and effervescence ; to make them jealous and suspicious of all measures not brought forward by demagogues ; and, above all, to train and habituate the people to opposition. And thus, in all oppositions, it is, comparatively speaking, of but little moment



whether those who conduct them fail or succeed in the particular points, for which, one after another, they so earnestly contend; their end is answered, and their point gained, by the embarrassments thus occasioned to the executive power, and by the agitation excited in the public mind. This is one among many unanswerable objections to a systematic opposition; since, as long as this system continues, it is impossible the nation should ever long enjoy any settled repose or tranquillity.

That the American opposition to episcopacy was at all connected with that still more serious one so soon afterwards set up against civil government, was not indeed generally apparent at the time: but it is now indisputable, as it also is that the former contributed not a little to render the latter successful. As therefore this controversy was clearly one great cause that led to the revolution, the view of it here given, it is hoped, will not be deemed wholly uninteresting. Even this account, however, will be incomplete till the reader is also informed how it terminated.

The anti-episcopalians carried their point with an high hand, which is no otherwise to be accounted for than that the party, in perfect union with their fellow-labourers in the British parliament, were in the habit of opposing every measure that seemed likely to strengthen the hands of government; and that then, and ever after, whatever was opposed became popular.

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That the object which in this instance was opposed, was either in itself really dangerous, or intended to be so, to the colonies in general, or to Virginia and Maryland in particular, will not now be pretended by any one. Hardly was their independence gained before an episcopate was applied for and obtained; an episcopate in every point of view as obnoxious as that which the same men, who were now it's chief promoters, and who were also the most forward in the revolution, had just before so violently resisted. The fact is curious; for it shews that, in opposing episcopacy, the leading men of those times opposed what they have since seen and acknowledged was for the interest of their country. And it should have some weight with the present inhabitants of America, when they reflect that the same men, who then, like good subjects, were honest and bold enough to warn their fellow-subjects of their error and their danger respecting the Church, observed the same line of conduct afterwards respecting the State. It is fair to infer from their subsequent conduct, that both they, and the great body of the people of America, are now convinced, that the persons who in 1771 were vilified and persecuted for wishing to introduce an episcopate, were not the enemies of America. May we not then be permitted to hope, that the time is not distant when the same judgment shall be entertained of the same men and their conduct respecting the revolution?

## DISCOURSE IV.

## ON AMERICAN EDUCATION\*.

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DEUTERONOMY, ch. vi. ver. 6, 7.

*And the words which I command thee this day shall be in thine heart. And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.*

AT one of the late meetings held for the purpose of consolidating the three free-schools of the three contiguous counties, (of which this is the central one,)

\* This sermon (as South says of one of his) was "penned and prepared" to have been preached in the Church of Portobacco in Charles County, Maryland, in 1773, on the occasion stated in the introductory paragraph. But, owing to some embarrassments in Government, (which even then were such as to excite very serious apprehensions,) the Governor, and those Members of the Council and Lower House of Assembly, by whose desire it was prepared, could not attend. Of course the meeting was put off, and the scheme came to nothing.

many



many ideas were suggested, and some propositions brought forward, on the subject of education. Tempted by the opportunity, I could not forbear mentioning several defects in modern education, for which the whole Christian world are in some degree censurable, but which seem to prevail most in these middle colonies of this great continent. Anxious that the school now to be enlarged and new-modelled should be formed on as good a plan as our circumstances will admit of, I was desirous to digest and state in this public manner the observations which were then hastily made. The sincere respect which I bear for the persons who made this request, left me no alternative ; and therefore I am now about to comply with it, with alacrity at least, if not with ability. I am aware that there are among my hearers many intelligent persons, who are practical examples that even modern education is sometimes eminently successful. This is a circumstance which cannot but inspire me with diffidence : at the same time, however, it gives me this encouragement, the consolation I mean, of knowing that if any principles which I may now recommend be (which God forbid they should be !) unsound, or any conclusions I may draw either weak, false, or impracticable, the public (if they receive no benefit from my investigations) can neither be corrupted nor misled by them. Any errors into which I may fall, will be easily detected by many of the able and candid judges before whom I now have the honour to speak. By comparing their own reflections

reflections on the subject with mine, I hope even they may be enabled to form a somewhat more correct judgment of it ; and as many of them are also members of different branches of our Legislature, they will have an opportunity of carrying their matured opinions into practice, not only in the school now to be instituted in this neighbourhood, but perhaps on a much more extensive scale in the province at large.

In the whole compass of human enquiries, I hardly know a more beaten track than this of education. In all civilized countries, and in all ages, it has engaged the attention and employed the pens of persons the most distinguished for wisdom and goodness. Yet (notwithstanding all this attention and all this instruction) it is by no means certain that mankind are greatly improved in this important particular ; even now, when we boast that we live in an enlightened age, education engages our attention chiefly in our books. [The ancients, if their experience of human nature was more limited, and consequently their stock of knowledge more confined, were very superior to the moderns, in this, that they certainly made a better use of what they did know.] Treatises on education do not appear to have been then written, as it really would seem they now are, merely to amuse, or to be admired for their ingenuity. The philosopher studied and wrote professedly for the State : and, in this point of view, Xenophon was as much a legislator as Lycurgus : for, the prevailing  
idea

idea of those times was, that education was rather a practical than a speculative subject; that it consisted more of duties than of doctrines; and, in short, that it was an apprenticeship to the business of life. Among the moderns, the archbishop of Cambray, proposing to himself Xenophon as his model, seems to have written his book with similar views. But it is melancholy to reflect, how very little this pleasing and most interesting book has contributed to the instruction of mankind in general; for even the enthusiastic admirers of Fenelon think it sufficient praise of Telemachus to regard it as an ingenious and classical romance. Not much more fortunate have been an eminent poet, and a no less eminent philosopher, of our mother country. Who that reads at all has not read Milton's "Treatise on Education;" and also Locke's: and who having read them, does not speak of them in terms of the highest commendation? Yet, how little has either the one or the other contributed to improve the national system of education \*!

Education,

\* It is by no means intended here to reprobate all speculative writings even on the subject of Education. All that the writer laments or blames, is, that speculative writings on these subjects, which are so rarely of a kind capable of being carried into practice, are so much attended to as to discourage any attempts to write really practical treatises. That even such writers, however, with much that is exceptionable, sometimes furnish matter even for practical uses, might be proved from Rousseau, the most speculative and fanciful of all writers. With all his faults, as a moralist and a politician, he rendered very considerable service to France and the neighbouring



Education, like every other art, is but a certain means to attain a certain end: this end is, that mankind may be good and happy; and whatever contributes to render them so, might, with great propriety, be regarded as education. School-learning, which we are too apt to consider as the sole purpose of education, is but one of the means; and of great moment only as it contributes to the main end. Whatever qualifies any person to fill with propriety the rank and station in life that may fall to his lot, is education. Thus considered, I see no impropriety in our saying of an artisan, or a planter, who perfectly understands the art he professes, that he has been well educated\*. It is in this more general and enlarged sense

neighbouring kingdoms, by exposing, in his *Emile*, the many ill effects of confining the limbs and bodies of infants in swaddling cloaths. It has, ever since the publication of that book, been very generally laid aside; and the good effects of its discontinuance are visible, in the much smaller number of children who are rickety and deformed, than was the case forty or fifty years ago.

\* “ Learning is a thing that hath been much cried up and coveted  
 “ in all ages, especially in this last century of years, by people of  
 “ all sorts, though never so mean and mechanical. Every man  
 “ strains his fortunes to keep his children at school: the cobbler will  
 “ clout it till midnight, the porter will carry burdens till his back  
 “ crack again, the plowman will pinch both back and belly, to give  
 “ his son learning; and I find that this ambition reigns no where so  
 “ much as in this island. But, under favour, this word Learning is  
 “ taken in a narrower sense among us than among other nations:  
 “ we seem to restrain it only to the book, whereas indeed any arti-  
 “ fans whatever (if they know the secret and mystery of their trade)

“ may

sense that I now propose to consider the subject: and so, instead of confining myself to the ways and means of raising good scholars, I shall endeavour to point out to you the more important duty of raising good citizens and subjects\*.

Exertion, application, and industry, are primary duties, which God requires of his creature, man. It is, therefore, one of the striking dispensations of his providence, that, though every thing, as it came out of his hands at the creation, is (as he himself declared it was) *good*, yet is it left to be made (if I may so speak) more *good*, by human means; that is to say, it is left capable of being brought to still greater perfection, by the skill, the diligence, and the exertions of men. A diamond in the mine, it is true, is indeed a diamond, even before it is polished; but it acquires lustre

“ may be called learned men. A good mason, a good shoemaker  
 “ that can manage St. Crispin’s lance handsomely, a skilful yeoman,  
 “ a good shipwright, &c. may be all called learned men; and in-  
 “ deed the usefullest sort of learned men. For, without the two  
 “ first, we might go barefoot, and lie abroad as beasts, having no  
 “ other canopy than the wild air: and without the two last, we  
 “ might starve for bread, have no commerce with other nations, or  
 “ ever be able to tread upon a Continent. These, with such other  
 “ like dexterous artificers, may be termed learned men, and more  
 “ behooveful for the subsistence of a country, than those polymathists  
 “ that stand poring all day in a corner upon a moth-eaten author,  
 “ and converse only with dead men.”——Howel’s Familiar Letters,  
 Book the 3d, Letter the 8th.

\* . . . . “ Τέττες ὅπως ὡς βελτιστοὶ ἔσονται——

Xenophon. Cyropæd. lib. 8. γ.

and

and value only by being removed from (what may be called) it's state of nature: nor, in it's native ore, is gold of more value than iron. In the vegetable world, and in animals of every kind, the case is the same. Without culture, even the grain of which bread is composed, and the most delicious fruits, would be hardly eatable: animals also, in a state of nature, are uniformly wild; and, whilst wild, useless. *Man too is born like a wild ass's colt; and brings with him into the world little more than a capacity for instruction.* Uneducated, he is a Caffre, a Peter the wild boy, a New Zealander: a little (and perhaps but a little) superior to an Ouran-Outang. But, of all the productions of nature, or of art, *there is nothing of so much worth as a mind well instructed.* Man is just what education makes him. Were there no education, there would be no knowledge; and if no knowledge, no virtue: *darkness would cover the earth, and gross darkness the people.*

"The boys among the Persians," says the Grecian philosopher above quoted, in his Cyropædia, "go to schools, and continue there, learning justice: and they say, that they go as much for the purpose of learning this, as boys with us go to learn literature." This Persian practice comes up very nearly to the idea, which I have formed in my own mind, of a proper and perfect system of national education. For, what is here called justice, is not to be understood in the narrow and confined sense in which we use the



word: [it comprehends every thing that is necessary to the forming a good man, and a good citizen.]

There is a passage in Ecclesiasticus \*, where the argument turns very much on the subject now under consideration, which seems to have in view the kind of education I now wish to recommend to you.

*He that teacheth his son, grieveth the enemy.* It is not possible to express, in stronger language, of what importance it is to a State that good principles should be instilled into it's youth†. The writer adds: *and though his father die, yet he is as though he were not dead.* To the State, it means, a father of a well-instructed son, even when *he is dead*, does not die: for, his good principles descending to his son, the State still possesses a good subject; and thus, even in an apparent loss of the State, the enemies of that State find no cause of triumph‡.

In no civilized country has education ever been wholly neglected; nor in any (I fear it may too truly be added) advanced to any such a pitch of complete-

\* Chap. xxx. ver. 3, 4, 5.

† “ Quid enim munus reipublicæ afferre majus meliusve possumus, quam si docemus atque erudimus juventutem? His præsertim temporibus atque moribus, quibus ita prolapsa est.”——Cicero de Divin. lib. 2.

‡ “ Gratum est, quod patriæ civem populoque dedisti,

“ Si facis, ut patriæ sit idoneus, utilis agris,

“ Utilis & bellorum & pacis rebus agendis.

“ Plurimum enim intererit quibus artibus & quibus hunc tu

“ Moribus instituas.”

Juv. Sat. xiv. l. 70.

ness

ness and perfection, as that it may safely be selected and recommended as a model. Just so, in every treatise or system of education, there probably may be found something useful and valuable: yet, where is there one that is, in all respects, what a considerate man would wish it to be? The best of any with which I am acquainted is to be met with in the Bible.

In proposing to you, on the subject of education, the Jewish polity, as the best model for your imitation, I am but little discouraged by the reflection, that a writer \* of no common note has, in various places of his various writings, spoken of it as “eminently barbarous and absurd.” The historical talents of this popular author, so much better calculated to please than to profit, are well appreciated by the historian † of the Jews in the character he gives of the Greeks; who also were celebrated for fiction ‡. If this were a place to go into a full comparison, and to draw a parallel between the legislator of the Jews and any other legislator, there could be no difficulty in proving how manifestly the advantage is on the side of Moses.

It is not pretended, that there is any where in the Scriptures any set or formal treatise on the subject of education: that is not the way in which doctrines are

\* Voltaire.

† . . . . . “Του δε γραφειν ψευδη, το βηλεσθαι δοκειν τι πλεον των αλλων ισχυειν.”—Joseph. contra Apion, lib. i. § 12.

‡ “Græcia mendax.”—Juv.

there usually taught. Information and instruction on the subject are to be collected from various passages, and chiefly from the laws and the history of God's chosen people : and I consider the superiority of this Scripture system, over all others, as arising, in no ordinary degree, from it's unequalled simplicity. Instead of various purposes pursued, as among us, by various plans ; and, not seldom, a variety of things that are studied and learned with no purpose or plan at all, the Jews had but one end in view ; for the attainment of which, the means were equally simple and uniform. Permanent security in the land of Canaan was the end ; and the means, obedience to God.

In one particular only, a Jewish education seems to have borne some resemblance to that of the Egyptians, the ancient Greeks, and the Persians : gymnastic exercises were a part of it. Yet there is no evidence, at least in the earlier periods of their history, that they had any schools or colleges. The *schools of the prophets* are supposed to have begun about the time of Samuel ; and were appropriated to the tuition (if not wholly, yet in a great measure) of prophets only. One reason for their having no schools might be the constant employment in which the cultivation of their lands engaged them, and in which their children were required to assist. This left them no such leisure as young people in other countries now find for a regular attendance on study, in places set apart for the purpose. It is observable, that the word, in the Greek language, from which our word *school* is derived,

M

literally



literally signifies *leisure*: and in Latin, a schoolmaster is one who regulates *play*. What I would infer from this is, that pupils in Greece and in Rome resorted to schools only by way of amusement and relaxation: and as Suidas gives the former of these terms as barbarous, the Greeks might have adopted it from the Jews, as well as from any other people\*. With respect to the Jews, this apparent defect (the want of schools) does not appear to have been attended with any very material disadvantages. Admitting that they had neither schoolmasters nor professors, still it must not be inferred that they were without public teachers. These, in general, were the priests and prophets of the Lord; and their rulers. It was the usual phrase among the Jews to call their rulers

\* “Sunt etiam musis sua ludicra: mista camænis

“*Ocia* sunt, mellite nepos! nec semper acerbi

“Exercet pueros vox imperiosa magistri.

“Sed requie (a) studiique vices rata tempora servant.

“Et satis est puero memori legisse libenter:

“Et cessare licet. Graio schola nomine dicta est

“Iusta laboriferis tribuantur ut *ocia* musis.

“Quo magis alternum certus succedere ludum,

“Disce libens, longum delenitura laborem

“Intervalla damus.”

Auson. ad Nepotem Ausonium Protrepticon de Studio

Puerili, Eidyll. iv. Vide Auson. ed. variorum, p. 309.

I conceive it to be extremely probable, that *school* may have originally been from the Hebrew term שָׁלוֹם, signifying *to be quiet, easy, secure*: though I readily confess, there is no evidence that the term was ever used by the Jews in any sense exactly analogous to a school.

(a) Pro requiei.

teachers :

*teachers*: thus Nicodemus is called both an Ἀρχων and a Διδασκαλος. The alliance indeed between a legislator or governor, and an instructor, is natural and proper: and with the most perfect propriety it might be said, that every ruler is, from the nature of his office, an instructor. The law itself is, as an apostle called it, our *schoolmaster* \*.

The law of God was the great object of study among the Jews; and, with them, the law of God comprehended the law of the land. For this purpose it was necessary that they should be taught to read: and this, it is probable, they could all do; because they were all commanded to *read* the law, and to meditate thereon night and day. But I do not recollect any passage which proves that (excepting those who at first were called *scribes*,) many of them were able to write. The Bible was the only book they read. And from this copious store-house they learned more than any other people could possibly know of the history of creation. They learned as much as they were materially concerned to know of their own origin and future destination; as they also did of the histories of the people with whom alone they had any intercourse. This single book furnished them with a system of civil law admirably adapted to their local circumstances and situation; a code of ethics at once practical and humane; and a form of worship, of which it is sufficient praise to say that it formed the portal of Christianity. It does

\* Gal. iii. 24.

not appear that they studied any language but their own; which, as a language, deserves the character that has been given to their government: it is equally distinguished for it's dignity and it's simplicity; and, if they did not read other languages, (translations being then hardly known,) it proves that they read none of the writings of any of the Gentile nations around them. From such writings they could have learned only the extravagant and absurd fables of idolatry: and from those it was one leading design of all their institutions to preserve them.

Among the Jews alone, children were suffered to hear and learn those documents only which tended to inspire them with the love and fear of the true God. Besides their histories, (of which also that was the ruling principle,) parables and allegories, and, above all, proverbs, or short aphorisms of wisdom, were invented. Such are the parables of Jotham and Nathan; and the excellent book of Proverbs by king Solomon. These compositions, as well as their psalms and hymns, were in measured numbers. And if it be true that that poetry is the most excellent which conveys the sublimest sentiments in the sublimest language, the poetry of the Hebrews seems to have an incontestible claim to an unrivalled pre-eminence. With poetry music is naturally connected: and if we may judge of the proficiency of the Jews in this pleasing art, from the effects produced by their performances in it, we cannot question their title to be called *the sweet singers of Israel*. Some one says of them,



them, that they were a nation of musicians : an assertion for which there is a sufficient foundation in their history, as contained in the Scriptures ; and of which the 137th Psalm alone is almost a direct proof.

It has already been intimated, that though they had no public seminaries of learning for the instruction of the rising generation, yet were they by no means without public instructors. These, at first, were patriarchs, then prophets ; then *able men, heads over the people, elders, and judges* ; whose office it was to *turn the children into the ways of their fathers, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just* \*. To these succeeded the scribes, whose profession it was to teach the law, which (as has before been observed) was the only knowledge which even men of learning then cultivated. The highest commendation that could be bestowed on Esdras was, that he was *a priest, a reader, and very ready in the law of Moses*. Ezra also is said to have been *a ready scribe in the law of Moses* †. Nehemiah too *brought the law before the congregation both of men and women, and all that could hear with understanding ; and he read therein from the morning until mid-day : and the ears of all the people were attentive unto the book of the law* ‡. A scribe, then, appears to have been professionally a reader of the law, and an instructor of the people : a circumstance which shews the extreme pertinency of that passage in St. Luke, where our Saviour asked a lawyer,

\* Exod. xviii. 25.

† Ezra vii. 6.

‡ Neh. viii. 2.

or scribe—*What is written in THE LAW—how READ-EST thou?*

Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were all careful to *train up their children* in the fear of God, and a religious observance of his laws: and Moses devoted the greatest part of his life to the sole purpose of teaching, reproofing, correcting, and exhorting the people committed to his charge, to receive the instructions of wisdom, and justice, and judgment; in which Aaron and Joshua were his willing fellow-labourers.

At length, when, from an increased population, and those changes which are naturally brought on in all countries by the change of times, some new regulations were thought expedient, Samuel founded *the schools of the prophets*. And in these a succession of holy men was raised, which did more than any similar institution in any other nation ever did, or could do, effectually to check ignorance, licentiousness, immorality, and idolatry. Secured by their wholesome instructions, it was long before Judea became distracted by a diversity of opinion on civil topics; or by those disputes and controversies concerning religion, which have so often been the fore-runners of the destruction of other empires. They all spake one language; they all had one creed; and were all unanimous in one common cause, the preservation of their laws: nor were they divided into sects and parties, till long after the captivity.

It was not left entirely to the discretion of the people to attend, or not attend, to this instruction. By  
law,

law, every man was obliged to repair to the temple three times in the year, and a Jewish sabbath admitted of no absentees. Their public instructions, it would seem, were given in general in the form of expositions on the law. What the law required of them was first taught : and after being thus shewn from the law what it was that they ought to be, they were freely told what they actually were ; for, those were not the times when priests or prophets degraded themselves, or their office, by flattering the people in their follies or their crimes. The earnestness of their instructions was proportioned to their importance. Nothing was enjoined without this condition being annexed to the injunction, that if they obeyed it they should be successful : whilst the heaviest calamities were denounced against disobedience. And more was neither promised nor threatened than (as appears from their history) was actually performed. What Azariah, the son of Oded, said to *Asa, and all Judah, and Benjamin*, entered into the spirit, if not into the letter, of every Jewish ordinance and injunction : *The Lord is with you, while you be with him : and if ye seek him, he will be found of you ; but if ye forsake him, he will forsake you \**. And hence that beautiful exhortation of Solomon's : *My son, keep thy father's commandment, and forsake not the law of thy mother : bind them continually upon thine heart, and tie them about thy neck. When thou goest, it shall lead*

\* 2 Chron. xv. 2.



*thee; when thou sleepest, it shall keep thee; and when thou awakest, it shall talk with thee. For the commandment is a lamp, and the law is light: and reproof and instruction are the way of life\*.*

The communicating of instruction to the Jews was not attended with many of the difficulties which now impede it's progress: for, Jewish lessons were seldom on abstruse and abstracted subjects; nor were the people, who were to be instructed, then bewildered and puzzled with a distracting variety of topics. Nothing was inculcated that was not first commanded by the law; so that there was then but little danger of their youth being initiated in *instruction which causeth to err*. Their teachers *spake not in the words which man's wisdom taught, but what the Holy Ghost taught*: and the sum of their instructions was, to *prepare the hearts* of the people to *seek the law of the Lord, and to do it*. The laws were not merely obligatory rules of action: they were proper and agreeable objects of study and philosophic investigation; for they all of them furnished lessons either of moral, political, or religious wisdom. So far are they from being founded in caprice, that even those

\* Prov. vi. 20, 21, 22, 23.—Sentiments exceedingly like these have often been admired and extolled in that fine passage so often quoted from Cicero:—

“Hæc studia adolescentiam alunt, senectutem oblectant, secundas res ornant, adversis perfugium ac solatium præbent, delectant domi, non impediunt foris, pernoctant nobiscum, peregrinantur, rusticantur.”—Cic. Orat. pro Archiâ, § 7.

of them which are merely ritual, are highly significant; and either convey some moral lesson, or are a commentary on some of the articles of their religion. Those too which are typical deserve to be studied, not only for their secondary, remote, and concealed sense, but for that which is primary, immediate, and obvious. And the end and aim of the Jewish code (whether we consider it's general regulations, or it's minuter and more particular provisions) seems invariably to have been to fix lasting impressions, on the minds of the people and their children, of the great importance of their *keeping the way of the Lord, and doing justice and judgment.*

To shew that many of their laws, which to superficial readers may perhaps now seem minute and mean, if not also sometimes arbitrary or barbarous, had some great political object in view, it may suffice to mention one instance. More constitutions have been overturned by intestine divisions than by foreign wars. Against these, therefore, the laws of the Jews provided with a degree of prudence and policy, which, if we may judge from it's effects, has rarely been equalled. The whole community was, by blood, one people. This strong tie of union was bound still faster by the tie of religion. Their faith and religious profession were uniform: they all had the same ministers of religion, and the same temple; and to this temple they were all obliged to come from every part of the country. And innovations in religion were prevented by an absolute prohibition of every thing belonging to  
*the*

*the gods of the nations*; as innovations in manners also were, by a similar interdiction of all intercourse with foreigners \*. For this Moses has been taxed with intolerance and barbarism: an imputation which might with equal justice have been objected to the law-giver of Sparta, as well as to the great kingdom of China, now perhaps the oldest in the world.

Almost every other legislator has encouraged commerce: but Moses wisely saw, that however advantageous to states adapted to it, it was as unsuitable to Palestine as it was to those divine ordinances which were intended to keep the people distinct and separate from other nations. Judea was not a maritime country; but it was peculiarly favourable to agriculture, and its inhabitants were remarkably intelligent husbandmen. And it is worthy of notice, that the great master of political wisdom among the ancients has declared, that those in general are the best governments, where the bulk of the people are employed in husbandry and pasturage †.

Among the Jews, an attachment to the land which God had given them, and an high reverence for their laws, were the strongest features of national character. All their laws and institutions had a tendency to peace, and led them to expect happiness chiefly

\* — “non enim maria transibant, neque exteros visabant, & ab his non visabantur.” — Cuneus de Repub. Hebr. lib. i. cap. 4.

† — “Οἱ πολίτευται κατὰ νόμον. ἔχουσιν γὰρ ἐργαζομένοις ἐν τῷ δυνάσταν δὲ σχολιάζειν.” — Aristot. in Lib. Polit.



from the arts of peace. This purpose was so much favoured by the nature of their country, that some of their historians have been of opinion that such a government could have existed in no other \*. Shut up between Libanus, the Euphrates, and Egypt, they were in a manner out of the reach of any ambitious neighbours; and meditating no conquests, they excited no jealousies: neither had they dominions, or the reputation of riches of any such extent as that they could be a temptation to invaders. It was, however, by no means the leading object of their founder to attach men merely to the soil of Palestine: the true aim of every law that was enacted, and the prevailing purpose of all the instructions that were given to them was, that they might *not do after all the abominations which the neighbouring nations had done unto their gods.*

And no doubt the perseverance of this people in the same system of religion and religious worship, (an event without a parallel in the history of the world,) is to be accounted for only from their equally extraordinary observance of their religious rites and civil institutions. They have been in captivity; they are dispersed all over the world, without one spot in it

\* “ Enimverò habuit Palæstinum præ aliis regionibus eximium quiddam, quod gentem sanctam atque rempublicam uni isti solo affixit. Extra eas sedes si quis populum illum abduxisset, & iisdem legibus instituisset rempublicam eandem, non jam reipublicæ sua sanctimonia, non populo sua majestas fletisset.”——Cunæus de Repub. Hebr. lib. i. cap. 8.

that they can call their own ; they are every where despised, every where oppressed ; and yet still they preserve their religion and their laws, and still are a people ; and they shall continue to be a people till all the prophecies concerning them be fulfilled : whilst other nations (even those reputed the wisest and most powerful) shall continue to enrich themselves by commerce, extend their dominions by conquest, change, innovate reform, and (if I may use the term) re-reform, and yet *wax old as doth a vesture*, and, “ like the baseless fabric of a vision, dissolve, and “ not leave a wreck behind.”

It is not to be concealed, however, that the Jews, even in the best periods of their history, were hardly more distinguished for the excellence of their constitution and their general attachment to it, than they also were for being often refractory and disobedient. This spirit at last grew to such a settled and systematic scheme of opposition to their rulers, that at length it brought on the destruction of government, and their own expulsion from their country. This inconsistency is to be accounted for only (as all wickedness is accounted for) from the general depravity of human nature. For, though God certainly never *dealt so with any other nation* as he dealt with them, still, with all their advantages, they were but men ; and all men are naturally wilful, stubborn, and rebellious. It should be remembered too, that, with many peculiar advantages, they laboured under some disadvantages. It always has been, and still is, the  
reproach

reproach of mankind perversely to turn blessings into curses. Hence, even the extraordinary favour shewn to the Jews might, and no doubt did, lead them to think too highly of themselves; and so they became self-willed and impatient of controul. And owing to this degeneracy, they became an easy prey, first to their own ill-governed passions, and then to their enemies, who had long lain in wait to take advantage of their errors. *For he who hath no rule over his own spirit, is like a city broken down and without walls.*

But what people or what nation is there among us so *without sin*, as that we may judge the Jews either for their guilt or their punishment? Have we so little experienced in ourselves the almost irresistible power of strong passions, and the blindness of inveterate prejudices, as that we shall presume to say, we should have done better had we been in their circumstances? I hope we should: mere modesty however may restrain us from the Pharisaical boastfulness of thanking God that we are better, or our nation better, than those Hebrews were on whom the vengeance of the Romans fell.

But it was perhaps as much the misfortune as the fault of the Jews, that at last their country and their government yielded to powerful invaders. A flock of lambs might almost as well be upbraided for not defending themselves against a troop of wolves, as the Jews be blamed for being conquered by the Romans. I am far from insinuating by this, that the Jews were deficient either in courage or skill, or even that they  
were



were without the usual resources of war. But their military talents, as well as the principles of their religion, and their laws, totally different from those of the Romans, were all such as qualified them to act rather on the defensive than offensive; and in war, I believe, the advantage is always supposed to lie on the side of the aggressor.

On some such important topics as have here been suggested, we may suppose the Jewish instructors to have frequently insisted. And however meanly we may now think of Jews when compared with either Greeks or Romans, it must be allowed that if they were not so distinguished by their prowess in war, they were, in the best sense of the term, a more enlightened, and of course a more happy, people. This enviable superiority they seem to me to have owed in no small degree to the superiority of their education, which was not, as in other nations, restricted only to their earlier years. All that has just been described to you, was the education of adults; and perhaps it is not a little owing to our leaving off our attention to it so entirely, just at the period of life when it certainly is most wanted, and when also it would probably have the best effect, that our education does not produce all the advantages, which, defective as it is, we might naturally expect from it. The fundamental laws of our country, and the principles and duties of Christianity, are indeed occasionally explained, taught, and inculcated: but whilst it is in the power of any one who pleases to counteract and contradict these

these instructions, and to pervert and corrupt our catechumens, are we to be surprised that even the most essential duties are not taught to better purpose?

Let it however be well attended to, that, even in this admirable system of the Jews, the public teachers only finished what the parents had happily begun. When parents had *trained* up their children *in the ways they were to go*, the charge devolved on the fathers of the whole family, whose office it then became *to feed those their flocks, like shepherds; taking the lambs in their arms, and gathering them in their bosoms.*

No sooner were the children (to borrow the language of a prophet) *weaned from the milk, and drawn from the breast*, than their parents began to *teach them knowledge*, and to enable them to *understand doctrine*. Experience confirmed the utility of what the law had previously directed. And on this point the law was not “vague and uncertain:” the text is clear and strong, and particular even to minuteness: parents were to teach their children, whilst they sate in the house, or walked by the way; when they lay down, and when they sate up\*. The same circumstantial direction is repeated too again and again; and the Psalmist alludes to it in a beautiful paraphrase†: *The Lord hath established a testimony in Jacob, and appointed a law in Israel, which he commanded our forefathers to make known unto their children; that the generation to*

\* Deut. ch. iv. ver. 10. and Deut. chap. xi. ver. 19.

† Ps. lxxviii. ver. 4, 5, 6.

come might know them, even the children that should be born, who should arise and declare to their children the praises of the Lord, and his strength, and his wonderful works that he hath done. The word in the text, which our translators have very properly rendered *teach*, literally signifies in the original, *to whet*; a metaphorical term, which, as applied to *teaching*, is strictly and eminently proper. The text thus becomes, both in phraseology and sentiment, not unlike to one in St. Peter \*, where the Apostle says, he thinks it meet to *stir up* his converts, by putting them in remembrance.

On the authority of the text, and some other similar passages, we are led to infer, that parental instruction was not in general communicated so much by lectures or lessons, as by occasional conversation, whilst the parents and children were at work together in the field, or on a journey, or in the social moments of domestic converse; *at the rising of the sun, and going down thereof* †.

But, since the digression (if it be one) naturally arises from the subject, and indeed belongs to it, let us

\* 2 Pet. ch. i. ver. 13.

† “ In Hindostan, the youth are taught, not within doors, but in the open air; and it is a very singular, but not unpleasing, spectacle, to behold in every village a venerable old man, reclined on a terraced plain, teaching a number of surrounding boys, who regard him with the utmost reverence and attention, like a shepherd feeding his flock. In those simple seminaries, where the want of magnificent halls and theatres is divinely compensated by the spacious  
“ canopy



us for a moment try to fancy and to describe in what manner a Jewish fire probably communicated his instructions. Imagine then to yourselves so venerable a man *sitting in his house*, with his infant charge around him. Taught by the law, induced by the customs of his country, and prompted by natural affection, instead of the uninteresting (and sometimes perhaps improper) conversations which elsewhere engross those moments which to a good man are the happiest of any he passes, a Jewish father would be led to gratify the natural inquisitiveness of his rising family, by explaining to them the origin, the design, and the authority of all their feasts, rites, and institutions. Every public festival (like a parable or an allegory) carried with it it's own peculiar moral or instruction; and was celebrated for the express purpose that it might be not only a memorial to the present generation, but as it were a living monument to all posterity, of the mercies which it was instituted to commemorate. And it was expressly enjoined, that the celebration of every feast, as well as of the passover, should be introduced with this preface: "*Thou shalt shew thy son in that day, saying, This is done because of*

"canopy of heaven, the gentle and tractable sons of the Hindoos  
 "are not only prepared for the business, but instructed in the duties of life, a profound veneration for the object of religious worship, reverence of their parents; respect for their seniors, justice  
 "and humanity towards all men; but a particular affection for  
 "those of their own cast."—Memoirs of the War in Asia, Vol. ii.

Appendix, p. 228.

*that which the Lord did unto us.* Aware how much more easily as well as effectually that kind of instruction, which it was his object to impart, is communicated through the medium and with the aid of sensible and even visible imagery, imagine you see him binding round their arms or their foreheads phylacteries or frontlets, on which were written \* four passages of the Law, commemorative of such interesting parts of their history as were best calculated to impress them with ideas of the goodness of God; that, looking on these, they might *remember the commandments of God, and do them.* Imagine him dwelling on this endearing topic, the infinite mercies of God, and recounting them in the enraptured strains of the 136th psalm; which psalm, if it was not originally composed for one of these paternal lectures, is undoubtedly well adapted to such an occasion. Imagine farther, that you hear such a father, with all the dignity of authority, and the earnestness of conviction, first singing (as was then the general mode of worship) the first stanza or portion of each verse or versicle alone, in the manner of recitative; and his little congregation, trained by example as well as by precept to catch some portion of his piety and his ardour, joining in responsive chorus, *for his mercy endureth for ever!* We know that some of the psalms were actually sung in some such manner: and I own I cannot figure

\* See Exod. xiii. from ver. 2 to 10. Deut. vi. from ver. 4 to 9. Deut. xi. from ver. 13 to 21. And Deut. xiii. from ver. 11 to 16.

to myself a way by which the two great purposes of historical instruction and national devotion could be more happily promoted, than by such a scheme of family worship.

Next, suppose him in the same little happy circle, *walking by the way*. Catching his ideas from the objects and the imagery around him, (which most probably were in general rural,) he would naturally direct his discourse to those topics. If he saw *vallies* (as in that country he often would) *standing so thick with corn* that they *laughed and sang for joy*, himself and his children might raise a choral song of praise to God, who *crowned the year with his goodness*. Struck with the astonishing fertility of the soil of Palestine, and reminded by their phylacteries of the passages of Scripture, in which that happy circumstance was celebrated, their hearts would be taught to glow with gratitude, that *the lines had fallen unto them in pleasant places*, even in *a land flowing with milk and boney, a land of hills and vallies, that drank* (very different from Egypt!) *water of the rain of heaven; a land which the Lord their God cared for, and upon which the eyes of the Lord were fixed from the beginning of the year even unto the end of the year*. Nor could he well help pointing out to them its superiority over *that land of Egypt whence they came out; where* (by a difficult and troublesome husbandry) *they sowed their land, and watered it with their feet as a garden of herbs*.

At the *lying down* or *rising up* of this our supposed



Jewish fire, the inexhaustible goodness of God, who gave *the sun to rule by day, and the moon and stars to rule by night*, would still be the unvarying theme of every morning and evening hymn. Beginning at the creation, when *the light was called day, and the darkness night*, we may imagine him to have traced their own history in regular succession down to *that night* when the Lord passed through Egypt, *that night of the Lord*, which, for that reason, was for ever to be *much observed of Israel*; and down to *that day when he smote the first-born of Egypt*, unto the day when they departed out of Egypt, while God himself *went before them to lead them the way, by day in a pillar of cloud, and by night in a pillar of fire*. It is hardly possible to imagine an evening song more apposite to their circumstances, more instructive, or more pleasing. And after such an *evening sacrifice*, they could not but *lie down, and rise up*, gratefully acknowledging how true it was (at least in their own case) that *day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge*.

From this imperfect sketch or outline (which, though confessedly imaginary, is not unsupported by authority) of the system of the Jews, I cannot but think myself justified in inferring from it, that there is not in all the history of the world another instance of another nation so truly *great*, and that had *statutes and judgments so righteous*: and I farther infer, that this their greatness was owing, under God, in a great measure to this circumstance, that their education

was so perfectly well adapted to their government. By calling the Jewish nation a *great nation*, I by no means intend to speak of them as of a nation distinguished only by its eminence in arts and sciences; by an extended and lucrative commerce; and still less, a nation famed only for military glory and boundless empire. The only criterion of a good government, in my estimation, is, that the people living under it enjoy peace and quietness; and a well-governed and virtuous nation is the only truly *great nation*. Let the character of the Jews be estimated by this definition, and it must be owned, that, (as was long ago said of them,) the ancient inhabitants of Palestine were indeed *a wise and understanding people*.

Permit me now, by way of application, a little to consider the state of education among ourselves: that, by comparing ours with that of the Jews and other nations, we may better see in what points our practice is right, and in what wrong; and so, either persist in, or alter it, as the case may be found to require.

In many respects these countries and their inhabitants bear a very near resemblance to Judea and the Jews. We dwell in *a good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains and depths that spring out of vallies and hills: a land of wheat and barley, and vines, and fig-trees, and pomegranates; a land of oil, olive, and honey: a land, wherein we eat bread without scarceness, and lack not any thing in it; a land, whose stones are iron, and out of whose hills we may dig brass.* In our

manners, moreover, and habits of life, we are not unlike to Jewish *householders*; for they (like those of our inhabitants who are planters) were used to lay up in their stores, once or twice in a year, *things new and old*, such as might answer the exigencies of the whole year. They lived also much, as our phrase is, within themselves: that is to say, they depended less on markets, and exchanging, bartering, or buying and selling, with one another, than they did on their own resources, for the supply of their domestic wants. Their religion was the basis of ours: and we are still under *the dominion of the law*; refined indeed, and spiritualized, and completed by *the grace and truth of Him who came not to destroy the law*. Neither is the constitution of our government, nor the administration of it, (at least in this province, for the absurdity of the New-Englanders, who incorporated into their body of laws some of the rituals of the Levitical law, is beneath our notice,) materially different from that of the Jews. Theirs indeed was a theocracy, which ours is not, in any other sense than as all government is the ordinance of God. Like us, the Jews also had a governor, who, as the vicegerent of God, ruled by the law of the land; and, if he was a good governor, *ruled them prudently with all his might*. And that he might not, in the words of their historian, *bear the burden of the people alone*, the most eminent persons of each tribe, who are sometimes called *princes of the congregation*, and sometimes

the



*the elders of the people*, were appointed to share with him in the arduous office of legislation and government.

But, on the subject of education, the resemblance fails. Theirs (as being uncommonly suitable to their circumstances) is entitled to the high praise of being a good education : whereas I must basely flatter you if I were not to declare, that, for the very same reason, yours assuredly is not a good one. It is not perhaps your reproach only, that [you pay far too little regard to parental education :] but it is highly disreputable to you, to have it said, that, with abilities abundantly adequate to a very ample provision, you have not provided the usual substitutes of parental education. I could hardly expect to gain credit, were I to inform a foreigner (what you know is the fact) that in a country containing not less than half a million of souls (all of them professing the Christian religion, and a majority of them members of the Church of England ; living, moreover, under the British government, and under British laws ; a people farther advanced in many of the refinements of polished life, than many large districts even of the Parent State ; and in general thriving, if not opulent,) there yet is not a single college, and only one school with an endowment adequate to the maintenance of even a common mechanic. What is still less credible is, that at least two thirds of the little education we receive are derived from instructors, who are either

INDENTED SERVANTS, OR TRANSPORTED FELONS. Not a ship arrives either with redemptioners \* or convicts, in which schoolmasters are not as regularly advertised for sale, as weavers, tailors, or any other trade; with little other difference, that I can hear of, excepting perhaps that the former do not usually fetch so good a price as the latter. I blushed, even for an Heathen State, when, long ago, I read, in one of the most intelligent moral writers of Greece, that they also were chargeable with an equally shameful and cruel instance of negligence †. Any such inattention you are far enough from practising in the other concerns of life; in which no people are more

\* *Redemptioners* were such Europeans as, resolving to emigrate to America, and not being able to pay for their passage, contracted with captains of ships to be permitted, on their arrival in America, to find a master for themselves, who, on their agreeing to serve him three, four, or five years, would redeem them by paying their ransom, or the money for their passage.

† ——— ἐπεὶ νῦν γὰρ τὸ γινόμενον πολλοῖς ὑπερκαταγέλασόν ἐστι. τῶν γὰρ δούλων τῶν σπουδαίων τοὺς μὲν γεωργοὺς ἀποδεικνύουσι, τοὺς δὲ ναυκλήρους, τοὺς δὲ ἐμπόρους, τοὺς δὲ οἰκονόμους, τοὺς δὲ θανεισθᾶς ἢ τι δ' αἱ εὐρωσι ἀνδράποδον οἰνόληπτον καὶ λίχρον, πρὸς πᾶσαν πραγματείαν ἄχρηστον, τούτῳ φέροντες ὑποβάλλουσι τοὺς υἱούς. The practice of many persons at present is very ridiculous: of the most capable of their servants they appoint some to be husbandmen, some to be commanders of vessels, some to be merchants, some to be stewards, and some to be money-scriveners; whereas, if they happen to meet with one who is either a drunkard or a glutton, and utterly incapable of business, to him they allot the management of their children. — Plutarch. de Liberis Educandis, edit. Reiske, tom. vi. p. 11.

expert,

expert, or more attentive to their interest. I do not mean to offend you, when I mention the sarcastic remark of Diogenes to the people of Megara; of which many particulars that I have observed among you have often reminded me. Seeing they took great care of their property, and paid little attention to the rising generation, he said, it was better to be one of their swine than one of their children.

This very reproachful neglect of education in the middle colonies it is in your power to remove; and you are without excuse for not having removed it long ago. But, besides this, public education labours under another great disadvantage among you, which I am afraid it is not in your power to remove: I mean the necessity you are under of bringing up your children among slaves.] Whilst I knew slaves and slavery at a distance and in theory only, I both thought and said, that, were it possible, from motives of curiosity, I could have a desire to bring up a child with the temper of a bashaw, at once cowardly and cruel, I would give him, in his early years, an unlimited controul over slaves. I thank God our children nowhere have such absolute authority over their attendants, who are always slaves, as is here stated; but they have every where too much: yet is it very far from producing, in fact, any such effect as, when I judged of it only from theory, I have owned I expected it would; for, I willingly bear you testimony, that, as far as my observations for more than ten years in the  
midst



midst of slaves are to be depended on, you are in the treatment of slaves mild and humane\*. Much of this (I can suppose) may be owing to your natural good temper and good sense: but more (I trust) is owing to the form of your government, and to your religion; because it is a texture of national character in which we again have the honour to resemble the Jews, who like us had slaves, and like us treated them with kindness. And when it is considered that, according to the subordination of conditions (which, for the good of all, our Maker has established among mankind,) some must toil and drudge for others; whilst slaves are well treated, and masters well served, the argument is not perhaps so decisive (as it is often assumed to be) that this kind of con-

\* I have heard a remark on the treatment of slaves by the different nations who possess them in America; which, if founded in fact, (as I believe it is,) may perhaps suggest some not incurious inferences. The Spaniards, whose national character is not generally supposed to be distinguished for gentleness, are said to be the most indulgent masters to slaves: next to them the French; then the English; and last of all, the Dutch. I once heard an Indian make the same observation respecting the French and English, in their treatment of Indians. The remark is not an uncommon one, that persons most clamorous about liberty are in general (on a comparison with others) most apt to be domineering and tyrannical in their private characters; for the same reason, I presume, that even tyrants, who have always been despots, are sometimes found to be indulgent and generous, whilst none are more apt to be insolent and tyrannical than those who, having been slaves, suddenly become possessed of freedom and authority over slaves.

nection between a master and a servant is less liberal, and less advantageous, than the venal and mercenary one of compact and hire ; which is not without it's disadvantages, any more than slavery.

I own, however, that I dislike slavery ; and, among other reasons, because, as it is here conducted, it has pernicious effects on the social state, by being unfavourable to education. It certainly is no necessary circumstance, essential to the condition of a slave, that he should be uneducated : yet this is the general, and almost universal, lot of slaves. Such extreme, deliberate, and systematic inattention to all mental improvement, in so large a portion of our species, gives far too much countenance and encouragement to those abject persons who are contented to be rude and ignorant. By seeing human beings, who, though uninformed, are yet satisfied with their lot, and never think of aspiring after knowledge, an acquiescence under a want of knowledge is produced ; which is more general among you, and of far more pernicious consequence than you seem to be aware of. A white man can hardly be so totally illiterate and without instruction as not to be in many respects better informed, and a wiser man, than slaves in general are. With slaves, however, he must often associate ; and with them he seldom finds reason to draw comparisons in disfavour of his own attainments : however low then he may be in the scale of intellectual improvement, whilst he sees others who are still lower, he ceases to be ashamed of his deficiencies. It has  
appeared

appeared to me, (and I fear I am not mistaken,) that the labouring classes of people here differ from those in the same sphere of life in the Parent State, in two particulars : they are more ignorant, and they are less religious. I am far from meaning to say either that they have not as good natural parts, or that they are more depraved : what I mean is, that they have little or no acquired information ; and though they are not perhaps particularly immoral, they are not moral on a proper principle ; they are not religious ; they neither know, nor wish to know, much of religion. Their want of general information may be accounted for in some measure, perhaps, from the great heats of our summers, which, I am very sensible, indispose all of us to exertion and habits of study : but, it can hardly admit of a doubt, that it is owing far more to their being so much with people still less informed than themselves. For their unconcern about religion (a circumstance of particular unhappiness to themselves, and hardly less to be regretted by the community) it probably is to be ascribed to the same causes ; that is to say, the same want of education, by which they might be informed of the value of religion : and, perhaps, in no small degree, to the particularly unassuming, unauthoritative, and unalluring way in which religious knowledge is here communicated ; as well as to the very few opportunities they have, or can have, of receiving religious instruction. Under the most favourable circumstances, a majority of the people of this province cannot hope to attend  
public



public worship and hear a sermon more than once in a fortnight or three weeks : and what minister can pretend privately to visit his parishioners (the most important part, perhaps, of the pastoral charge) in a parish of fifty or sixty miles extent ?

When I said that two thirds of the persons now employed in Maryland in the instruction of youth were either indented servants or convicts, the assertion was not made quite at random, nor without as much previous authentic information as the nature of the case would admit of. If you enquire who and what the other third are, the answer must be, that, in general, they are aliens, and in very few instances members of the Established Church.

Were it not the hard fate of religion to be regarded as an inferior and insignificant part of education, [it must be deemed incongruous, that those natives who are born in the communion of the Church of England, and are intended and expected to continue in her communion, should be taught their religion by dissenters \*.] One of the first and most obvious effects of

\* Dr. South, in the close of his Sermon on Education, speaking of schools and academies kept by dissenters, declares, in his warm and strong manner, that " it is a practice that looks with a more threatening aspect upon religion than any one fanatical or republican encroachment made upon it besides : for, this is the direct and certain way to bring up a race of mortal enemies both to Church and State. To derive, propagate, and immortalize the principles and practices of forty-one to posterity, is schism and sedition for ever ; faction and rebellion in *secula seculorum* ;

" which,

of this loose manner of enforcing religious impressions is a sort of general latitudinarianism; and when mankind have once been brought to think that one religion is as good as another, the next step is to conclude that the thing itself is not of much moment: and when religion in general is thus set at naught, neither good morals, nor good conduct, will be much regarded. I should imagine there are few persons so careless (not to say profligate) as not to be shocked at the idea of leaving behind them a degenerate and worthless posterity. I were better (as the famous William Penn long ago observed) that the world should now end with us, than that we should be the means of continuing it only that it may be wicked and miserable.

The truth is, we are so much out of order in this great business, that it would be to compliment us to say we have only the sin of neglect to answer for. We have not only left undone that which we ought to have done; but have also done that which we

“ which, I am sure, no honest English heart will ever say Amen to.  
 “ We have, I own, laws against conventicles: but believe it, it would  
 “ be but labour in vain to go about to suppress them, whilst these  
 “ nurseries of disobedience are suffered to continue. For, those first  
 “ and early aversions to the government, which these shall infuse  
 “ into the minds of children, will be too strong for the clearest  
 “ after-convictions which can pass upon them when they are men.  
 “ So that when these under-ground workers have once planted a  
 “ brier, let no governor think, that, by all the arts of clemency and  
 “ condescension, or any other cultivation whatsoever, he shall change  
 “ it into a rose; &c.”—South’s Sermons, vol. 5. Sermon i. p. 44.

ought

ought not to have done. And that we are not already *reprobate to every good work*, is more owing to the goodness of God, who had singularly blessed the people of these countries with a natural abhorrence of every thing that is monstrous either in vice or in folly, than to our care and prudence in instructing the rising generation. We have among us proofs in abundance of the influence of education; but unfortunately they are the proofs only of the bad, the wrong effects of a bad education. They too plainly shew what men may become by being trained up in idleness, ignorance, and impurity of manners.

In either moral or political conduct it is reckoned no ordinary proof of wisdom to submit sometimes to be taught even by an enemy \*. Mark then the conduct of the various sectaries now every where springing up among us, like weeds in a neglected soil. They not only plant their schools in every place where they can have the most distant prospect of success; but they have conducted their interests with such deep policy, that (as was observed of the Jesuits in Europe) they have almost monopolized the instruction of our youth. Of our American colleges only two (I think) are professedly formed on the principles of the established religion.

We are not, however, (I bless God!) wholly without tutors of meritorious characters, nor without some places of education which are not liable to these

*Exemplum* \* ———— "*fac est et ab hoste doceri.*"

exceptions.



exceptions. Yet, even with those men, and in those places, the education is not of the right sort. Proud, as perhaps it is no reproach to us to own that we are, to form our manners and our sentiments on the model of the Parent State, yet much more disposed to copy her follies and her vices than her merits and her virtues, we servilely follow the track she chalks out for us, in instances where we might commendably depart from it : and hence even our best education, like her's, is incongruous with our religion and our laws. As Christians, there surely is a propriety in our being taught the doctrines of Christianity; and as subjects, intended to live under a monarchy, we are at least preposterously, if not dangerously, educated, when we are taught to prefer republicanism. Yet what are all the admired authors usually found in schools, to the study of whom alone we devote our first and best years, but the seducing panegyrist of a very lax morality, and of still more dissolute principles of policy ? They may perhaps furnish us with the best models of composition, and enable us to shine as orators and rhetoricians : but, what are these in comparison with the importance of forming good men and good citizens ? You will believe me, it is not without some compunction of heart that I can bring myself thus to tear the well-earned bays from the brows of these admired writers, to whom so large a portion of my life has been devoted, and in whose bewitching society I still spend (and hope long to spend) many of my pleasantest moments.

moments. Let them still be read, still studied, and still admired ; as no doubt they always will be by all men of true taste : but let not our youth be sent to them only, to learn their duty to God, their neighbour, and themselves. It is high time that the children of Christian parents should have a Christian education : it is high time that we should, in earnest, and totally, *renounce* Heathenism ; the doing of which, a learned Divine \* says, is the true meaning of the promise, to *renounce the devil and all his works*, made for us at our baptism.

When, towards the beginning of this discourse, I took the liberty to censure writers on education for having confined their observations too much to schools and schoolmasters, I hope I could not be understood as meaning to insinuate that I thought either schools or schoolmasters to be improper or unnecessary. Parents, no doubt, are the natural tutors of their own children : and though, under the strict government of Sparta, this was found to be too great a power to be safely trusted in their hands, he must be a bold man who should venture to recommend to the State to exercise the same power in the same way now, in the eighteenth century, and in the province of Maryland. Not that it is a privilege, on which parents seem now to set any high value ; whatever might be the case, if it were invaded : their great fault and greater reproach is, that they take little or no concern about it.

\* Dr. Hammond.

Perfectly indifferent who educates their children, so that they themselves have not the trouble of attending to it, they persuade themselves their duty is done, and done well, whilst they pay for having it done; no matter how, or by whom. So far, however, am I from undervaluing either schools or schoolmasters, that I think it one of the most objectionable circumstances belonging to your province that [it has in it so few of either,] and that even those few are so poorly encouraged.

No public measure, therefore, has lately been brought forward which I think more proper or more commendable than the proposed incorporation of these schools. That it would have been better to have made each of the separate schools a good school, will hardly be disputed: I am thankful, however, that at last we have the prospect of at least one reputable school on the Western shore. In what has hitherto been done in the matter, you seem to me to have done well: and I feel it to be my duty, as it certainly is my pleasure, to bid you *go on, and prosper*. You must indeed, literally, go on; or all that has yet been done has been done in vain. Having now given being to an infant seminary, you must not, like the ostrich, desert your own offspring. If it be not, in strictness of speech, a child of your own, it is at least an orphan and a minor, and you are its trustees and guardians. This trust, I can well rely, you will faithfully perform: and as the time is now come for your making rules and statutes for its future government,



ment, let me yet have leave to suggest an observation or two respecting both the discipline and the instruction which it may be expedient to promote in it.

As to discipline, the first and most essential point is, the choosing a proper person to preside over your school: and, in determining who is proper, it will behove you to be especially careful to “choose no  
“man out of favour or affection, or any other worldly  
“consideration, but with a sincere regard to the honour of Almighty God and our blessed Saviour, as  
“you tender the interests of the Christian religion  
“and the good of men’s souls\*.” Condescend to copy the precaution of a venerable Society, to which America has long owed the greatest obligations: and have good assurances of your schoolmaster’s “zeal for the Christian religion; diligence in his calling; affection to the present Government; and conformity to the doctrine and discipline of the Church of England †.” Let him be required also, after the example of another no less venerable Society ‡, on his admission into your school, to subscribe some such solemn declaration or promise, as follows: that “he does  
“heartily acknowledge his majesty King George to  
“be the only rightful and lawful king of these realms;  
“and will, to the utmost of his power, educate the  
“children committed to his charge in a true sense of

\* Instructions given by the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge.

† Do. by the Society for propagating the Gospel in Foreign Parts.

‡ That for promoting Charity-schools in Ireland.

“ their duty to him as such : that he will not, by any  
“ words or actions, do any thing whereby to lessen  
“ their esteem of, or their obedience to, the present  
“ Government : that, upon all public days, when the  
“ children of this school may be likely to bear a part  
“ in any tumults and riots, (which are an affront to  
“ Government, and so great a scandal, as well as pre-  
“ judice, to these realms,) he will do his best to keep  
“ them in, and restrain such licentiousness. And  
“ likewise, if there be any catechisms or institutions  
“ which teach or encourage any exceptionable politi-  
“ cal or party principles, such as are incompatible with  
“ the Law and the Constitution of this country, he  
“ will immediately throw them aside, as pernicious  
“ to the original design of this pious nursery.”

You will also, I imagine, think it incumbent on you to do at least something towards directing and settling some prescribed plan, manner, or system, by which you judge it proper that public instruction should be communicated. It is true, indeed, that, in my own country, I have seen and experienced the short-sightedness of that wisdom which, in the founding of schools and other seminaries of learning, hoped to perpetuate good principles, by ordering and enjoining a particular set of books to be read ; books which have now long been obsolete. But, to avoid this rock, it is not necessary to run upon another, and to leave the course of reading or study open to the caprice of every new governor of a national institute. I conceive you may, with perfect propriety,

direct

direct, not only what shall not be studied, but what shall. ] Instead of indiscriminately compelling all our youth, with or without a genius adapted to such studies, to spend the whole period of education in fruitless attempts, “merely (as Milton says) to scrape “together a little miserable Greek and Latin,” it is much to be wished some discrimination could be made; and that boys hereafter might be taught, not words only, but such things as they are best qualified to learn, and such as are likely to be of most use to them in the part they are hereafter to act in the great drama of life. What is practicable and useful in one country, might be made so in another. In Russia, a grand scheme was formed for instituting one great uniform plan of a national education; which was to have comprehended (besides all the usual articles taught in schools) various branches of natural philosophy, as applied to the practical businesses of life; together with lectures on naval, military, civil, and commercial subjects; and more particularly, instruction in agriculture. That it has not been carried into effect, I have not been informed: if it has, it is hardly possible it should not have succeeded\*. How far such a project could be brought to bear in these times, and in this country, I do not take upon me to say: but to make it a part of our present plans, (I own,) I think is impracticable. If, however, we can-

\* Such readers as may wish for fuller information as to the scheme here mentioned, are referred to the *Biographia Britannica*, new edition, under the article DR. JOHN BROWN, vol. ii. p. 663.



not be taught all that is proper, we may at least avoid being taught what is improper. And, with all due deference to some great authorities, let me, without offence, be here permitted to mention, that our extreme partiality for oratory, and speech-making, may with great propriety be discontinued. I am neither prepared nor disposed to enter into a full comparison of the advantages and disadvantages of oratory: my opinion is, that, whatever may formerly have been the case, it now every where does much more harm than it does good anywhere. It is, I suppose, because, along with their rules and modes of speaking, we sometimes adopt the sentiments and principles of our great masters in the art, who were republicans, that orators are in general adverse to government. If I am not much mistaken, I have not unfrequently heard speeches replete with sedition, whilst yet the speaker had no serious ill-will nor mischievous intention against government, nor any other aim than the credit of making a popular harangue. No injury, therefore, I apprehend, will be done to your institution, though declamations and speech-days should be no part of it's system.

Particular grammars, or particular catechisms, cannot well be specified and enjoined by statute: but there is one book of instruction, which (by the blessing of God, I trust) will never come into disuse; I mean, THE BIBLE. Let classical learning still be attended to as it deserves; and no man is more ready than I am to acknowledge that it deserves to be very  
much

much attended to : but, let it no longer monopolize all our attention. Let schools, at length, come to be regarded as nurseries of religion and good morals, as well as seminaries of learning ; and, whilst we read and study the classics, (as excellent models of all that is elegant or perfect in composition,) let us take due care not to be misled either by their loose morals, or any of their false notions of government. Thus read, and thus studied, so far from doing harm, they may do good. I see nothing incompatible between a fine taste and a pure morality, between being a good Scholar and a good Christian. Thus guarded, we may read tribunitial harangues against legal restraints, without even weakening that necessary and just *subjection to those higher powers*, who were ordained by God for the benefit of man : we may admire the language and elegance of the composition, whilst we despise and detest it's principles. But I have not been so heedless an observer of men and things, as not to have seen instances, in abundance of men, of liberal, generous, and cultivated minds, lost and undone by the habit, first acquired at school, of reading only classics : instead of loving Christian verity and purity, they have thus become contented to grope and grovel in the darkness and filth of Heathenism.

If the picture, presented to you in this discourse, of the Jewish system of education, (a picture which I believe to be drawn from the life,) has appeared to you, as I own it has to me, better calculated than that of any other people to inspire the rising generation with

that warm attachment and love for their country which alone deserves to be called rational, virtuous, or Christian, you will not perhaps think it beneath you to imitate at least those parts of it which are suitable to your circumstances. Something like a compromise, it would seem, might easily and advantageously be made between the excessive dread and abhorrence which Jews were taught to entertain of Gentile principles and manners, and the no less excessive predilection of Christians for them. And should the idea of such an accommodation be favourably received, I take the liberty to suggest to you two points in the Jewish code, which, I persuade myself, will be found as practicable as they certainly are reasonable. Whilst it shall continue to be thought proper that, as an essential part of a liberal education, our youth should be enabled to read the immortal compositions of Heathen orators and poets in their original languages, I hope it will not be thought less proper that they should be enabled to read the Scriptures also in their respective original languages. I likewise hope it will not be thought less necessary, nor (permit me to add) less agreeable, that the History, the Laws, and the Constitution of our own country should be diligently read and studied by our young men, whether in a school or a college, than those of the Heathen states of antiquity.

To conclude—May you so found and regulate the institution now to be put under your guardianship, and may you so faithfully and carefully watch over it  
when



when founded, as that it may be an honour and a blessing to your country ! And, *O may that God, who hath fed us all our lives long, and hath redeemed us from all evil, bless our children, and teach them the good way wherein they should walk\* !*

\* Gen. ch. xlviii. ver. 15. and Exod. ch. xviii. ver. 20.

## DISCOURSE V.

## ON REDUCING THE REVENUE OF THE CLERGY\*.

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PROVERBS, ch. xxiv. ver. 21.

*My Son, fear thou the Lord, and the King; and meddle not with them that are given to change.*

IT was far from Solomon's intention, in this earnest dehoration to his son, to discountenance all change; as that would differ but little from discountenancing all improvements. In arts and sciences, it is commendable in men to be always aiming at *something new*, and even to be *given to change*; as far at least as real improvements imply *change* †. It is in matters

\* Preached at Annapolis, in Maryland, in the year 1771.

† “Magnum certè discrimen inter res civiles & artes: non enim idem periculum à novo motu, & à novâ luce. Verùm, in rebus civilibus, *mutatio etiam in melius suspecta est ob perturbationem: cum civilia auctoritate, consensu, famâ & opinione, non demonstratione, nitantur. In artibus autem & scientiis, tanquam in metalli fodinis, omnia novis operibus & ulterioribus progressibus circumstrepere debent.*”——Lord Bacon.

only

only which concern government, morality and religion, that this propensity to *change* becomes dangerous; because, in those points more especially, mankind are most apt to mistake innovation for improvement.

On other subjects men may speculate, try experiments, and attempt improvements, if not always with advantage, yet perhaps without danger. But there is danger, even in the notion, that religion and government admit of improvement; much of their influence and efficacy depending on the persuasion that they are already perfect. This is the argument of the text, in which the wisest of men rests a respect and reverence for laws, either human or divine, entirely on the persuasion that they have the authority of God.

It is by no means asserted or insinuated, that any religious establishment, or any form of government, either is, or ever was, so faultless as to be absolutely incapable of amendment; nor that it is not wise and proper for mankind to endeavour to render both still more and more perfect. All that can be inferred from the text is, that every man who has a due regard for God, whose will it is that mankind should be religious, and live under government, (without both of which it is impossible they ever should live happily,) will be cautious how he listens to any new projects which it is possible may weaken the foundations of either the one or the other. With no desire wholly to controul this innate bias of the human mind, Solomon



is contented to regulate it ; and, therefore, equally careful not to encourage his son in the visionary and romantic idea, (not unnatural to a youthful mind,) that in government and religion it was expedient to plan fresh alterations and to aim at farther improvements, he warns him against those bold reformers who are usually eager to change *old things* for no better reason than that they are old, and to adopt new only because they are new.

Unsteadiness, and a propensity to *change*, are as hazardous to communities as a levity in shifting from opinion to opinion is disreputable to individuals. Fickleness is a prevailing feature in the character of children : and if there be any foundation for the supposition of etymologists, that the word *changeling*, as denoting an idiot, is derived from this childish passion for *change*, it proves that the being *given to change* has long and generally been considered as eminently unwise.

It is remarkable that this strong predilection for *change*, with all it's good and all it's bad consequences, prevails chiefly among Europeans. Whether we, who inhabit Europe, (for I consider the British colonies in North America still as Europeans in this respect,) were originally formed with more active minds, or whether there be something in our climates that is peculiarly adapted to set our faculties in motion, we want *data* to enable us to determine : but the fact is not more extraordinary than it is certain, that most of the great revolutions of the world

have taken place, not in Africa, nor till very lately in America, but in Asia, and in Europe. It is hardly more characteristical of the governments of Europe to be liable to change, than it is of those of the East, that, like the laws of the Medes and Persians, they *alter not*; or, if in some of them great revolutions have sometimes occurred, they have been effected, not as in European states, by any fluctuations in the popular opinion, but by the overbearing ambition of some towering and successful individual. Of the truth of this remark the great kingdom of China is a striking instance; in which, with the exception of that single revolution which set the present Tartar family on the throne, (but which produced no alteration in the internal state of the country,) no *change* of any moment affecting their government is recorded in their history. Their other institutions, and even their manners, are equally unvarying and permanent.

Just the contrary is the character of the nations of Europe, and their dependencies. Here every thing is in a state of perpetual mutability. To what extent that motley principle called Fashion, which exists and flourishes only by *change*, prevailed in the ancient states of Greece and Rome, it might not perhaps be easy to ascertain: but I believe it is now peculiar to us, on this side the Line, to yield to the dictates of fashion, not only in the less significant circumstances of life, such as dress, food, amusement, and modes of living, but also in manners, opinions, principles, and doctrines.

doctrines. Men of reading and observation can easily name the times and the countries, when particular systems of philosophy, particular tenets of religion, one after another, have been adopted merely through the caprices of fashion. Of these systems many, after enjoying a short-lived glory, are now fallen into total disesteem, in some instances perhaps with as little reason as they were before embraced. Nothing of this sort enters into the character of the people of the East, who are as tenacious of old opinions and old customs as we are fickle and changeable. A modern Bramin differs but little either in principle or practice from Zoroaster, the founder of his sect; whilst neither a Church, nor a Sect, nor a System of Philosophy, nor a Form of Government, can be named in Europe, which has not undergone many and great alterations.

Considered in this point of view, the history of Europe is but the history of *the changes and chances* which have resulted from the fluctuation of opinions. Every age has had, and still has, it's appropriate feature: and every country has been, and is, distinguished by some certain cast of sentiment, some ruling propensity, or the prevalence of some favourite and fashionable mode of thinking. It would be more than curious (if it were possible) to ascertain, and collect into one point of view, all the effects that have flowed from this unchangeableness in the Southern world, for the purpose of comparing them with the effects to which our propensity to *change* has given birth.

In



In some respects, each peculiarity has, no doubt, been both advantageous and disadvantageous to the inhabitants of either hemisphere. We owe it to this our variableness of temper, that our characters are more diversified, and of course more interesting; and to this unceasing search after improvement we also probably owe our acknowledged superiority in arts and sciences. But it is much to be questioned, whether our advancement in goodness and happiness has kept pace with all these other boasted improvements. As individuals, we are litigious, dissatisfied, and restless; and, in our public capacities, factious, turbulent, and rebellious: whilst the poor Gentoo, even under the delusions of a false religion, is in practice humble, unoffending, quiet, and peaceable, to a degree that ought to shame discontented and refractory Christians.

Such is the imperfection of man, and such the perfection of art, that, to effect any great improvements, no ordinary portion of time is necessary; so that, considering how short life is, and how limited our capacities, even in their best estate, confessedly are, it might be well, if, going on in a progressive state of melioration, one age could finish what another began. This, however, is not now the usual course of human conduct: instead of availing ourselves of the wisdom of those who have gone before us, the employment of one age is to pull down what the preceding age had established, and one reigning error is destroyed only to make room for another. False systems

systems are thus not unfrequently raised on the ruins of false systems, whilst we thus run from extreme to extreme ; truth is missed ; and mankind, though always in search of happiness, yet pass through life without finding it.

Still *given to change*, and still prone to *meddle* with things which it would be our wisdom and felicity not to *meddle* with, the fashion of this our day is, (to the reproach perhaps of our inventive faculties,) not to adventure on new, hazardous, and untried experiments of our own, but servilely to copy the faults and the follies of those whose desperate projects of innovation brought so dark a cloud over the brightest period of our history in the last century. Like the busy *meddlers* in the grand rebellion, our ruling passion is to dislike and quarrel with every thing that is settled ; and it seems to be our highest gratification to be permitted to pull to pieces and destroy systems and establishments which it would probably have exceeded our abilities to have formed.

Instead of a careful and dispassionate study of our present Constitution, (which wants but to be studied and understood to be admired and revered beyond any form of government merely human that ever was established upon earth,) we examine it only to find out its flaws : as some philosophers, more curious than wise, furnish themselves with glasses of extraordinary powers, to enable them to discover the spots of the sun. There have, no doubt, been periods in our history, when our ancestors, under a diffidence

fidence of their private judgment, were perhaps too ready and tame in giving up their own opinions as individuals, through a blind deference to the judgments of others. It was then the fashion to acquiesce in whatever had been long established. And it is neither superstition nor folly thus to be contented with institutions of long continuance, though palpably imperfect ; even in preference to such as in theory might seem less exceptionable, but which have never been tried by the touchstone of practice. There are cases, however, and those not a few, in which it may be both creditable and beneficial to us to depart from long received and established maxims : but, whenever we do so, the necessity must be manifest, and the change conducted with all possible temper and judgment.

“ Reformation of grievances,” says an excellent Divine \*, “ is confessedly a good work, when it is indeed wanted ; that is, where the corruptions complained of are real ones ; where the advantages reasonably expected will counterbalance the hazards attending all merely human attempts in this way ; where it is conducted not only by warm hearts, but by cool heads ; and concluded by such as know how to build, as well as how to pull down.”

No change, in a settled state of things, can be a matter of indifference ; for, the mere act of changing, even when it is allowedly for the better, is ha-

\* Dr. Geo. Fothergill. See his Sermons, vol. i. p. 88.



zardous, by the countenance and encouragement it affords to those who are *given to change* \*. In these busy and eventful times, distinguished chiefly for a restless spirit of innovation, the wisest and best men, eager to introduce reforms which they deem absolutely necessary, will do well to consider, whether the good arising from their projects may not ultimately be more than counterbalanced by the evil. The good expected is uncertain, but not so the harm to be apprehended, if one certain consequence of all changes be the shaking, in some degree, the established system, under which the community upon the whole live quiet and contented †. For, as it is well observed in the preface to our Liturgy, “common experience sheweth, that where a change hath been made of things advisedly established, (no evident necessity so requiring,) sundry inconveniencies have thereupon ensued, and those many

\* “*Ipsa mutatio consuetudinis, etiam quæ adjuvat utilitate, perturbat novitate.*”——St. Augustin.

† “The mischiefs that have arisen to the public from inconsiderate alterations in our laws, are too obvious to be called in question. The Common Law of England has fared, like other venerable edifices of antiquity, which rash and unexperienced workmen have ventured to new dress and refine, with all the rage of modern improvement. Hence frequently it’s symmetry has been destroyed, it’s proportions distorted, and it’s majestic simplicity exchanged for specious embellishments and fantastic novelties.”——Blackstone. See his *Introd. on the Study of the Law. Commentaries*, vol. i. p. 10. 8vo ed.

“times more and greater than the evils that were intended to be remedied by such change.”

St. Paul, in his second Epistle to Timothy \*, according to our translation, exhorts him to *flee youthful lusts*. Now, it is remarkable, that the word here translated *youthful* † occurs only in this place, where another sense would better suit the context. It's theme, νεος, in it's primary sense, is *new*: but it is also with great propriety, though in a secondary sense, often used for *young*, and sometimes for *young persons*. The verb νεωτερίζειν, from which this term νεωτερισμός (the word now under consideration) is derived, occurs frequently; and the sense of it, according to Hederic and all lexicographers, is *res novas moliri*, to *innovate*, to be *given to change*. Hence, instead of *flee youthful lusts*, our translators might (almost as literally as, and certainly not with less exactness than, the present version) have rendered the passage, in conformity with Solomon's charge in my text, *avoid*

\* Chap. ii. ver. 22.

† “Per novitias cupiditates, recentiores quidam interpretes intelligunt vana innovandi desideria, & nova dogmata, & opiniones, quo cæteris videantur esse sapientiores, fastidientes antiqua: unde scriptores neoterici. Et non turpes lascivias, quæ juvenili ætati incidere solent; quod colligitur ex personâ Timothei, qui abstinentissimus erat, & ex præsentis loci circumstantiis: hæ cupiditates igitur vitia sunt quædam animi, quibus laborare solent juvenes, ut liquet ex subjunctis virtutibus, quas his desideriis opponit, viz. inanem ambitionem & gloriolas, quibus qui student novare, juveniliter agere, à Græcis dicuntur; unde oriri solent aliorum contentus & contentiones.”——Hardy's Gr. Test. in loco.

*innovating* ; that is to say, in other words, indulge no new-fangled desires, whims, or fancies ; give no countenance to those restless members of the community, whose ruling passion is change, and a hankering after novelties.

That this modern interpretation of the passage is indisputably the true one it might be presumptuous confidently to assert : but it is confessedly the most agreeable to the main scope of the epistle. Nor is any other interpretation so consistent and consentaneous, as this is, with those exhortations to *steadiness and constancy*, which are the points most insisted on in both these letters to Timothy. All those striking expressions which occur in them both, such as men who are *boasters, proud, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, truce-breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, high-minded, traitors, beady, despisers of those that are good, &c.* are highly proper, when applied to persons and times *given to change*. And it is at least not improbable that, at the time these epistles were written, the people of Ephesus, who, as well as *Phygellus and Hermogenes*, and *all those who were in Asia*, had always had *itching ears*, had been misled by some artful demagogues ; so that they were not only no longer disposed to *endure sound doctrine*, but even infatuated enough to *turn away from the Apostle*. In such a state of things, there was a particular propriety in the Apostle's cautioning Timothy against such delusive and dangerous *innovations* : these were the errors and vices of the times ; whereas *youthful lusts* can



can apply only to Timothy's personal character: in which, excepting that he was *young*, there certainly was nothing to require, or even to justify, so pointed an admonition.

It has already been intimated, that religion requires or can bear *innovations* the least of all human concerns. For, religion is not of men's invention; which may therefore be differently modified according to their different apprehensions and capacities. No: it is to be received, if at all, as a revelation from God; and must therefore, like it's high origin, be *the same to-day, yesterday, and for ever*.

And if religion itself be thus sacred, every thing that is connected with it, and especially every thing that is necessary to it's maintenance and support, must also in some degree be sacred: yet neither as religion itself has not, so neither have religious establishments (which are essential to a national religion,) always escaped the rash hands of rash reformers. In all ages there have been those who, vain of being *wise above what is written*, like the fabled giants of old, have been so impious as to attack Heaven itself. It may well humble men of even the brightest talents to reflect, how often very great abilities have been perversely employed to call in question even the most important truths of revelation; and that in this department of literature the most pernicious *innovations* have originated, if not in learning, yet in the pride of learning.

I am far from insinuating, however, that the people

of America have now any thing to dread either from learning, or the affectation of learning. Our danger arises from rash and daring ignorance ; from the pertness and self-sufficiency of men who are so illiterate as even to despise learning ; and from the *meddlesomeness* of republicanism. That bold and busy spirit of *innovation* which, with such infinite industry, has lately been disseminated through the other districts of the empire, has at length reached and infected even this remote province : and whilst the great reformers of the Parent State, with base ingratitude, exert all their strength to depreciate religion itself, by denying the divinity of our Saviour, we (as if conscious of our inability, through our want of learning, to astonish the world by any puny efforts of ours to advance even irreligion) resolve to distinguish ourselves, not by an attack on the citadel, but by insidiously undermining the out-works. Without avowing or perhaps having any settled purpose really to overturn religion, our ill-will or our indifference for it seems for the present to be sufficiently gratified by a weak and unhallowed attempt to destroy our religious establishment. And such is our conceitedness, fostered by the *meddling* temper of the times, that there is now hardly a man among us, however low and illiterate, who does not deem himself fully competent to reform both Church and State.

You have long been tutored and instructed in these topics by a numerous tribe of reformers, who, in whatever else they may be deficient, certainly do not  
want

want either confidence or industry. Whilst, therefore, like *certain of the synagogue, which is called the synagogue of the libertines*, they stir you up to change the customs delivered to you by Moses and by Solomon, be it my humbler (but I trust, holier) task, with the plaintive Jeremiah, to exhort you to *ask for the old paths, and the good way*, and to continue to walk therein.

The point now chiefly aimed at by our present Maryland reformers, is a crude and novel scheme to reduce the salaries of the great Officers of the State, and the incomes of the established Clergy. To render either the one or the other more useful to the community, by rendering them more independent; still more to ensure a faithful discharge of their important functions, by some more judicious application of the great engine of rewards and punishments; or to remove impediments that now stand in the way of their duty; or to devise still farther aids to facilitate it's performance; are reforms which make no part of our projects: they all aim at one single point, some little narrow, penurious, savings.

In freely delivering to you my opinion from this place on the case of the Clergy, I clearly keep within my immediate province as a preacher of the word of God. If, however, tempted by the opportunity, I also venture to suggest to you a few observations respecting your Civil Officers, let me hope the digression will be pardoned, if it be only in consideration of the motive; which is an apprehension that, though it



certainly is of but small moment what my opinions may be on any questions of State, yet if I should be quite silent on the subject, it might be inferred, that, anxious only for my own interests, and those of the body to whom I belong, I cared little what became of any others; or, perhaps, that I gave up the case of the Officers as incapable of being vindicated.

The real motive for this reform, I am persuaded, is it's apparent frugality\*; whilst the ostensible one is, to lessen the influence of Government. If it were decent to animadvert on a reason which even those who are actuated by it are ashamed to produce, it really is too low and mean for notice: and as to the assigned reason, it should, I think, first have been proved that this supposed influence really is too great; and if it be, that this scheme of reducing the salaries of it's Officers is a good way to lower the ascendancy of Government.

It might be demonstrated, that, as things are now constituted, our Government can exist and perform it's proper functions only through influence. Let us, for a moment, consider and discuss this position.

\* " His political notions were those of an acrimonious and surly republican, for which it is not known that he gave any better reason than that a popular government was *the most frugal*; for the trappings of a monarchy would set up an ordinary commonwealth. It is surely very shallow policy that supposes money to be the chief good; and even this without considering that the support and expence of a Court is for the most part only a particular kind of traffic, by which money is circulated, without any national impoverishment."——Johnson's Life of Milton, p. 143.

The excellence of the British Constitution is, that it consists of three distinct, independent, and equipollent, powers; the King, the Lords, and Commons. This too is the fair model of our Maryland Government; which consists of a Governor, an Upper and a Lower House; excepting that, here, all offices and honours are elective: none of them are hereditary. Thus the case stands in theory. In practice, however, some material changes have taken place in both Governments. Through some cause or other, which I am not called upon either to praise or dispraise, neither the King, nor his Governor here, though each of them is still one of the three co-equal powers composing the whole of these respective legislatures, any longer exercise their prerogative as legislators. With respect to the exercise of any prerogative in legislation, the case is the same in all the Colonial Governments, royal as well as proprietary. Who ever knew the King, or any Governor under the King, on the strength only of that prerogative which the Constitution has undoubtedly vested in him, directly give his negative to any bill that had passed both the Houses? No; all his power is exercised entirely through the medium of influence. Whether wisely or no, this change of direct prerogative into indirect influence has been occasioned solely by the undue predominance of the popular interest. It is not therefore unfair to conclude, that though the people dislike prerogative, they do not dislike influence: because the change of prerogative for influence has been effected

effected entirely through popular means. There is no other way in which the third branch of Government can take any part in legislation. Since, then, by our own choice, the executive power can have any weight only by having influence, it should, in common reason, have the means of obtaining that influence.

In the present state of human affairs, at least in this part of the world, where even matters of duty and points of honour are not unfrequently regulated by the commercial balance of profit and loss, a man has, or has not, influence, only as he has, or has not, the power of conferring favours. Deprive your King, or your Governor, of all means of benefiting others; and, unless you should see fit to restore prerogative (for the exercise of which, or at least of what he conceived to be such, by it's having been uniformly exercised by his predecessors on the throne, the royal martyr lost his life) you deprive him of his proper share of weight in the scale of legislation. With all the advantages of family connexion and support on their side, and the purse of the Nation in their hands, the preponderance of the two Houses, when opposed to the kingly power, would be, in comparison, as the measure of a mountain is to that of a mole-hill: and hence all the energy and efficacy of one of the three estates of the realm would be destroyed. A partial loss of influence will produce the same effect, as far as it goes: so that to weaken these buttresses of government is in effect to weaken government itself. It follows,



follows, then, that, by degrading and lessening the consequence of the persons employed in the high offices of government, you will not only render their stations mean, and therefore no longer likely to be solicited by men who are really respectable; but you will clip the wings of the most conspicuous and dignified branch of the legislature. You will render that feeble and inefficient, which ought to be the strongest: and by thus stripping administration of all power to do good, in the way of open, direct, and constitutional influence, you will drive it to the wretched shifts of subterfuge and intrigue\*.]

Other and better arguments in defence of a liberal and honourable allowance to your few great Officers of State, have been, and will be, urged elsewhere. Solely for your sakes, and to obviate your misconceptions and prejudices, I ventured thus far to digress from my immediate purpose. It is not, I believe, usual in political controversies of this sort, to argue only on the real merits of the question; but I made it a point thus fairly to meet this question of influence, which is the only plausible objection that I remember ever to have heard urged against great salaries. If they cannot be defended on that ground, I do not say they are utterly indefensible, but they are clearly less defensible. If, however, you still think the greater weight of the argument lies on the side of those who

\* See many fuller and stronger arguments in behalf of influence in the Crown, in Paley's Moral Philosophy, Book vi. cap. vii. p. 491. 4to.

contend that any influence in the hands of a supreme magistrate is unnecessary and improper, or who (believing that the influence which he now possesses is excessive) consider the scheme of reducing the salaries of his Officers as the best way to lessen it, you must resolve, as no doubt you ought, to abide by your own convictions. All that I presume to add, is, be as economical with the public purse as decency and dignity will permit: but, do not weakly imagine, that all influence is corrupt, or employed to corrupt purposes; or, if it be, that the executive power alone has influence, or even corrupt influence. If we must be reformed, if *changes* must take place, be at some pains, I entreat you, to have them so conducted as to avoid that common failing of mankind, the flying from a small evil only to fall into a greater. In your zeal to get rid of monarchical pomp and splendour, beware of falling into republican meanness and insignificancy.

But whether you and your leaders be right or wrong in their first instructing you how to instruct them to insist, in the approaching sessions, on a reduction of the salaries of your Secretary and your Commissary and other great Officers of State, there surely can be no good reason for connecting the case of the established Clergy with that of those eminent persons who are placed in high civil stations. Two cases more dissimilar cannot well be imagined.

Pardon me, if, whilst with particular earnestness I thus enter my feeble protest against this part of the project, I take the opportunity also to express my  
disappro-

disapprobation of that dangerous expedient, now coming into fashion, of carrying all great points respecting government by what is called an appeal to the people. Despairing of success from the fair and manly method of free and impartial debate, our demagogues find it easier to bias a portion (and sometimes a considerable portion) of the public mind, by enflaming their passions: and thus the people (ever liable to become the easy dupes of factious men) are incited to demand with clamour what should be granted to them, if at all, only because they have a right to it, and its concession would be for the advantage of the public. To what dreadful ends such artful conduct may lead, I own I am almost afraid to think: recollecting only, as I do with dread, that it was thus the people once were cunningly led on to depose a Charles, and make a Cromwell their protector; to intercede for a thief, and to crucify the Saviour of the world.

Prepared as you now are to look for *changes*, and to be contented with nothing but great reforms, it seems to reflect no great credit on your reformers, that, after all their diligence and zeal, they have been able to devise nothing of higher consequence than a reduction of the revenues of the mere handful of Clergymen which your province contains. In attempting to discredit our order, they are, alas! far enough from being singular. Every where we find many who, caring but little for religion, care still less for it's ministers. And I mention, with grief and shame,  
that



that in no part of the world has our Church found either more numerous or more inveterate enemies than in the Parent State, where yet it is her happiness to boast of a Clergy pre-eminent in learning and piety. In England, reformers, one after another, have long teased the world with project upon project for the reformation of the Church. Distressing and mischievous, however, as their unceasing opposition is, candour requires us to acknowledge, that it has generally been conducted with some semblance of sense and decency. Their attacks have been and are directed not always solely against her tithes ; but against her tests, her articles, her creeds, her liturgy, and her hierarchy. It was reserved for a few *meddling*, half-learned, popular lawyers of Maryland to raise a petty war, not directly and avowedly against the Church, nor against the priesthood, nor against her present ministers ; but merely against their revenues. It is a project that does no credit to their country : and I speak of it with tenderness, when I am contented to call it the miserable expedient of a set of weak men, instigated by the example of some of the most unprincipled that ever were permitted to give laws to mankind. For, after all, these reformers of the Church of Maryland are doing no more than was done in the last century by the Rump Parliament. And, unless Providence shall, in it's mercy, see fit to give you the grace and the wisdom not to *meddle with them*, this attack on our Church may end, as it did in Cromwell's time, with the downfall of the State.

We

We are told, that one proposed appendage to the new inspection law\*, is to be, the giving to the people an option to pay their Clergy in tobacco, or in money, at their own pleasure. Not long since, these same reformers of Church and State, the lawyers of Maryland, found out a legal quibble, by which they gave it as their *opinion*, that the perpetual act of 1701, 2, which established our Church, was originally null and void †. They are now contented to modify this same

\* In the tobacco colonies there was a law, that no tobacco should be exported, or even tendered in payment, (most of the fees of office, and most public services, as well as the revenues of the Officers and Clergy, being payable, not in money, but in tobacco,) till it had been publicly inspected by inspectors publicly appointed, and a certificate had been given of it's being of a marketable quality. All over the colonies, large warehouses were erected for such inspections.

† The case was as follows: An act for the Establishment of the Church of England was, in the time of King William, i. e. in 1701, 2, framed and passed by the Legislature of Maryland; and then, according to the usual course of proceeding, sent home for the royal assent. The act, as framed in Maryland, was not wholly approved of in England; and therefore it was sent back, amended and modelled according to the King's pleasure. These amendments were adopted in the next Provincial Assembly, and in due form enacted into law. In the mean time, and before it was possible that the event should be known in Maryland, King William died: this act, however, when a second time sent home, modelled and passed according to the form directed by the late King, was approved of and confirmed by his successor, Queen Anne. Notwithstanding this, and notwithstanding also that the act had been received, and generally acted on as law, for upwards of seventy years, and that it had been recognized by fundry subsequent acts, some of which had even been grounded on it, some popular lawyers now discovered, that

same dead act anew, for the single purpose of lessening the provision there made for the maintenance of the ministers of the Church of England. I have seen an answer of the Upper House to a petition of the Clergy, on an occasion like the present; in which (so far from having any designs to *diminish* the revenues of the Church) they declare, that “*the law was designed to ADVANCE the interest of the Clergy in particular.*” I have also seen an answer of the Lower House of Assembly to a Governor’s speech, in which are these remarkable words: “we will always bear a just regard to that reverend body, nor attempt to obtrude any terms on them, which it may not suit their inclinations to accept of: *nor do we see any reason to join the income of the Church and State on the present occasion, the former being GROUNDED ON LAW, the latter not.\**”

Truth

that it was originally null and void. Their plea was, that the Provincial Assembly, which passed this law, was not a legal assembly; as having been summoned and called together by a writ in the name of King William, when King William was dead.

\* It is much to the credit of our Church that, ever since her establishment, all our succeeding Legislatures have respected and cherished her interests with parental solicitude: and it is perhaps not less to her credit, that Mr. Locke himself, on an occasion that is much to our present purpose, also declared himself very unequivocally in her favour. In the 96th Constitution of Carolina, he says—“It shall belong to Parliament to take care for the building of churches, and the public maintenance of divines, to be employed in the exercise of religion, according to the Church of England; which being the *only* true and orthodox, and the national



Truth cannot vary. If these opinions and assertions were well founded in 1739, they cannot now be ill founded; though very different doctrines are now in vogue. What these Maryland patriots of other times considered as *grounded on law*, and therefore sacred and inviolable, their successors consider as *grounded* only on their wills, and therefore neither sacred nor inviolable. It might be invidious in me to draw any comparisons between the legislators of 1739 and 1771, in point of abilities and integrity: but if you will be at the pains to look at the proceedings of their respective assemblies, you cannot fail to see a striking difference between them.

So far from being shocked at the idea of the injustice of robbing us of a third, or a half, of our absolute freeholds, there are not wanting those who gravely talk of reducing our Order to the primitive standard of the apostolic age: and many are the patriotic harangues which are daily delivered to you on this popular subject. I cannot persuade myself to give any other reply to these curious declaimers than by observing, that whenever they shall be pleased to set us the example, and reduce themselves to the standard of those to whom the apostles preached, we will no longer hesitate to emulate the self-denial and the humility of the apostles. Need I inform

“ tional religion of all the King’s dominions, is so of Carolina, and  
 “ therefore it alone shall be allowed to receive public maintenance  
 “ by grant of Parliament.”

these Gentlemen, that to do this, they must *sell all they have, and give to the poor, and follow us?*

I mean not to call in question the competency of any legislature to enact laws affecting private property, when such laws may be necessary for the public weal. Their omnipotency is acknowledged as to every thing, excepting, I hope, that they cannot or will not be partial and unjust. To whatever burthens they may see fit to subject us we have no right to object, provided only they are impartial and general: but they have no right to impose particular burthens on an individual, or any number of individuals; nor even to revoke or resume what themselves may have granted, if there has been no violation of the conditions on which it was granted. I came among you on the sanction and encouragement held out to me by the public law of the land: incorporated myself with you by a kind of compact; by which I stipulated faithfully to perform the duties of a parish priest, on the fair condition of receiving that stipend which the existing law secured to me. I contend, therefore, that, in good faith as well as in common prudence, I clearly have as good a title to all the emoluments arising to me under the authority of that law from my benefice, as any other man has to any other estate. That the law may be altered with respect to future incumbents, is not denied: the doing so would perhaps be unwise; but, with respect to Clergymen now living, it is manifestly unjust: and it should be well considered what may be the consequences

quences of thus openly violating all the common principles of good faith and honour.

But the people (we are told) have been led to expect to pay off the Clergy's dues at four shillings per taxable\* ; and it may be dangerous to disappoint them. Hence it is to be understood, that whenever a point is to be carried, the party espousing it have but to instruct that docile part of the community, whom they may see fit to call the people, to expect it; (no matter what address and management are employed to raise the expectation, no matter whether the thing proposed be either just or wise,) the *people* must not be disappointed. For a man, at the eve of an election, to give out that *he will follow the instructions of his constituents, though against his private opinion*, however ridiculous, however base, may perhaps, with other finesses, be overlooked, because, alas! the case is not uncommon. But for any man, or

\* All males, and all black females, between 16 and 60, were taxed, and indeed the chief objects of all public assessments: being all regularly numbered, the public taxes were levied according to the number of such taxable persons which each proprietor possessed. In Maryland the revenues of the Clergy were at first settled at the rate of 40lbs of tobacco to be paid by each taxable person in each parish: these 40lbs of tobacco, on the passing of the Inspection Law, were reduced to 30; thirty pounds of inspected tobacco being deemed to be of equal value to forty pounds of uninspected. At the period now under consideration, this tithe in kind was commuted for a payment in money; by which the Clergy, in almost every instance, were sure to be losers, with hardly a possibility of gaining in any.



body of men, first artfully to excite a popular clamour, and then, on an important occasion, to profess to be guided by that clamour, is such an instance of profligate double-dealing, as, in any other case, even the lowest of the people would see through and despise. It was thus that Pontius Pilate first instructed the people to call for the blood of their Redeemer, and then crucified him *to please the people*.

It is in your power and therefore it is incumbent on you to set me right if I am wrong, when I declare it to be my firm belief, that those inhabitants of this province, whom alone it is proper to call the people, are by no means particularly desirous of this particular reform. It suits our popular men, as they wish to be called, to have it believed, that the people are with them, and therefore it is so reported. Hitherto, however, we have had no evidence of this being the fact but the declaration of interested men. Many of you, I know, do approve of the measure; because, in all communities, there are numbers ever ready to come into any scheme by which they may save their money. But I also know, that there are still more who like it almost as little as I do; who see and reflect, that the pretence of relieving the people is but a pretence. In this parish there are between twelve and thirteen hundred taxables; two thirds of whom are richer than I am. Now, by this goodly project these two thirds also, as well as the poorer one third, are all to be *relieved* at my expence alone.

It might be expected that, in an act expressly  
framed

framed *for the relief* of the people, the poorer any man was, the greater share he should have in the benefits expected to result from the act. But in the regulation now proposed it is just the reverse. A poor man, who pays for but one taxable, may save perhaps a shilling or two in the year by it: whilst the projectors of it compliment themselves with ten, twenty, or an hundred times that sum. Having no interests distinct from the true interests of this our common country, I could be contented chearfully to bear any burthen (as I now do) in common with my fellow-subjects, for the support of government, or the general advantage of the province. But it is surely hard to be thus singled out, directed, and ordered, how much of my undoubted property I shall give away, and to whom. And it is a tax on my charity, equally unwise and unjust, to oblige me, for every sixpence I bestow on the poor, to bestow forty times as much on the rich.

The assessment of 40lbs of uninspected tobacco per taxable, for the maintenance of an established Clergy, is certainly, like the first offerings that were ever made on a religious account, in the nature of a tithe; and intended to be paid here, as in all other countries, *in kind*. But, for the mutual convenience of the parishioners and the minister, there are some parishes so particularly circumstanced, that money has usually been, and is still, taken in lieu of the tithe in kind. In all such cases the composition is generally settled at a rate which is thought equivalent,

or nearly equivalent, to the value of the tithe: and it is evident how difficult it must be to fix such rates which depend on the value of a fluctuating commodity, for any length of time, without loss to one or other of the contracting parties. The Clergy of Maryland will, therefore, be careful how they surrender their claim to tithe in kind for any specified sum of money whatever: it being perhaps capable of demonstration, that no casual increase of taxables bears any proportion to the certain decrease of the value of money. Tobacco is probably a more fluctuating, and doubtless a far less certain commodity, than any of the products of the earth that have ever been tithed; still, however, even tobacco is more likely to keep pace with other articles of necessary use, than any fixed sum of a provincial paper-currency. Establishments supported by payments in money are, at least, unusual, and, in various points of view, liable to many objections. In no way can they be regulated, so as not to want still farther regulating in a very few years: and it seems to be incongruous with the idea of an *establishment*, that it should be *unstable*. No money is of any certain, perpetual, intrinsic value: and a temporary, local, provincial paper currency is still more uncertain than sterling money. It is not impossible, but that a pound in Maryland may become of as little value as a pound in some of the New England governments. Admitting then that two hundred pounds currency a year, which, it seems, is now thought a *liberal* allowance, were really  
so,



so, (though more than that sum might have been received from the common interest of the money expended in educating some of us, without sinking the principal,) how will our successors be in a condition to support their stations with decency, when the same denomination of money may not answer to an half, a quarter, or a tenth of that sum? Money payments might, for aught I know, be as acceptable, if not more so, to many of the present Clergy, as tobacco: but, a century hence, any payment of money that is now only adequate, must become utterly inadequate. It is well known, that every necessary and convenience of life has risen hardly less than tenfold; or (which is the same thing) the value of money has decreased in that proportion within the last hundred years. So that I see no paradox in asserting, that a Clergyman possessed of a benefice which, an hundred years ago, brought in one hundred pounds per annum, was better provided for, and to all intents and purposes a richer man, than his successor in the same living, who may now happen to receive five or six times that sum\*.

Such a country as this is well able to support the

\* "Since money is of no other use than as it is the thing with which we purchase the necessities and conveniences of life, it is evident that if £5. in Henry VI.'s days, would purchase 5 quarters of wheat, 4 hogheads of beer, and 6 yards of cloth, he who then had £5. in his pocket was full as rich a man as he who now has £20. if with that £20. he now can purchase no more wheat, beer, or cloth, than the other."—Bp. Fleetwood's *Chronicon Preciosum*, p. 49.

dignity of Government and the independency of it's Officers; to pay Lawyers of merit (of whom there are many in the province) with liberality; and to maintain a reputable Clergy in a decent and even dignified manner. It has often struck me, that the people of this country are not sufficiently aware of the importance of externals in religion. Excepting the provision made for the maintenance of ministers, (which merely through a change of circumstances during a long course of years has in some instances become considerable and handsome,) every thing relating to religion is formed on a narrow and contracted scale. Our churches, in general, are ordinary and mean buildings; composed of wood; without spires or towers, or steeples, or bells; and placed, for the most part, (like those of our remotest ancestors in Great Britain,) no longer perhaps in the depths of forests, yet still in retired and solitary spots, and contiguous to springs or wells. Within them there is rarely even an attempt to introduce any ornaments: it is almost as uncommon to find a church in Maryland that has any communion plate, as it is in England to find one that has not: in both Virginia and Maryland there are not fix organs; the psalmody is every where ordinary and mean, and in not a few places there is none. To minds of a certain cast, I am aware it may seem beneath me to have adverted to such circumstances: it will be thought perhaps still less creditable either to my understanding or my taste to own, that I have felt and lamented the want of such natural and obvious aids to devotion. Yet

I am

I am convinced the services of religion may be too naked and unadorned, as well as they may be overladen with pomp and ceremony. We are formed to be moved by what we see, as well as by what we hear: and the judgment is often convinced, as well as the affections warmed, through the medium of the senses. All these considerations would be attended to by a people and a legislature of large and comprehensive views.

It is mean and illiberal to talk of stinting Clergymen to a bare support. We are often by birth, and always by education and profession, gentlemen: and if the establishment of such an order of men be of moment to the welfare of society, (as it unquestionably is,) society is much concerned to see that means be provided to enable us to live in a decorous and exemplary style\*. In vulgar reckoning, a mean condition bespeaks a mean man. And though it be undoubtedly right that personal respect should follow personal merit alone, yet, while human passions and human policy have so much to say in these affairs, we cannot be ignorant how all such points will be determined. The question is not, how a

\* "I am not possessed of an exact common measure between service and reward. The service of the public is a thing which cannot be put to auction, and struck down to those who will agree to execute it the cheapest. When the proportion between service and rewards is our object, we must always consider of what nature the service is, and what sort of men those are who must perform it."—Mr. Burke's Speech on Reform in 1780, p. 53.



Clergyman, when poor, ought to be regarded, but how he will be regarded: and against the contempt of poverty no age has ever found a remedy, no ability a defence, nor any virtue a shelter. It is not only an evil in itself, but it is contagious, and brings every thing into contempt which appears to be connected with it. When it has rendered the man contemptible, his function soon shares the same fate. And when our functions become involved in our personal disgrace, the religion, of which we are ministers, cannot long escape; at least not among the bulk of mankind, who seldom separate the essentials of religion from its external circumstances. As long therefore as you still think it right to keep up an established ministry, it is to be hoped you will be so consistent with yourselves as to keep up one that may be respectable; one in which frugality may obtain independence, and virtue procure esteem \*.

The utmost that the most able and careful of the Clergy in Maryland can expect is, to live decently in a private way, and to educate their children in such a manner as that by their own industry, and a

\* ———“ for he (viz. Julian the apostate) robbed the church, “ and spoiled spiritual persons of their revenues, and took all from “ them, whereon they might live; and thereupon, in short time, “ did follow great ignorance of true religion and the service of “ God, and thereby great decay of the Christian profession: for “ none will apply themselves, or their sons, or any other whom “ they have in charge, to the study of divinity, when they shall “ have, after long and painful study, nothing to live upon.”——  
Coke's Reports, part 2.—See Bp. of Winchester's Case, p. 45.

small portion, they may be able to live above contempt when we are gone. We are not the men who may hope to get estates, and lay foundations for building up families by the gains of our profession, though we every day see fortunes made by other professions. Look round the province: who are the persons now possessed of your great estates? Are they not, in general, the sons either of men who have held places under Government, or of lawyers, physicians, or merchants? This is not said because I think either the fathers or the sons were to be blamed. Far from blaming, I heartily commend the one, and congratulate the other. But where, I ask, where is the estate acquired by a Clergyman from the gains of his profession? Yet you will hardly deny, that many of our Order have been men of such abilities, that, had they chanced to have been bred to other callings, they might probably have made as good a figure, and amassed as large estates, as others have done.

I am no advocate for large revenues to the Clergy, nor do I indeed believe that there are many such in Maryland; though the contrary, I know, is the general opinion. And yet, in every other profession, the persons engaged in them receive infinitely greater incomes, without being either censured or envied. You will pardon my observing to you, that, in every other department, there have been complaints of abuses; but I have the satisfaction to find that no insinuations of this sort have yet been thrown out  
against

against your Clergy. In truth, it is well known to be out of the power of the most avaricious, ill-minded, or artful Clergyman, as such, to over-reach the meanest inhabitant of his parish.

An income is large or small, as it exceeds, or falls short of, what will maintain him who receives it reputably in the country in which he resides. Judging by this principle, there is not in the province more than one parish greatly, if at all, too large. That one excepted, so far from being an "*object of envy to an English bishop* \*," there is hardly another which produces to the incumbent an income equal to that of an attorney in tolerable practice. And even of that one it is unfair to judge by the reported number of taxables. Between the list of taxables, as set down in the sheriff's books, and what the incumbent actually receives, it is well known there is a wide difference.

However much the revenue of the Church is magnified, a fair statement of her receipts would shew you, that the aggregate or sum-total of her estate is inadequate to the maintenance of a competent number of reputable Clergymen. We have but forty-four beneficed Clergymen; and even in this our infant state twice that number would be inadequate to the exigencies of the province. As we increase in

\* This was one of the vehement expressions made use of by a popular orator, in the debates on this question in the Maryland Assembly.



population, the number of our parishes and churches should also be increased: for it never can be thought that religious instruction is sufficiently communicated till every man, who is so disposed, may have it in his power, with his family, conveniently to attend divine service at the least once in every week. Every parish is too large, as long as there is a parishioner distant more than four or five miles from a church where there is service every Sunday: but, at present, most of our parishes have two churches, in which duty is alternately performed every other Sunday: in several parishes there are three churches; and of course, service only once in three weeks. However indisposed, in general, to hasty reforms, I cannot but allow that this is a case which calls loudly for reformation; and the obvious means to redress the grievance is to divide such parishes, and, out of one over-grown parish, to form two or three that are more compact and manageable. Much has been said of the drudgery which some officiating Curates in England undergo: but what are their labours and their toils compared with those of a conscientious incumbent in Virginia or Maryland; who, besides occasional duties, which are oftentimes of a kind unknown in England, and lie wide and far from his home, can rarely attend one of his churches without first riding perhaps ten or twenty miles? By letting the revenue allotted to the Church remain in its present form, all these inconveniencies might in time be removed, and without adding to the burthens of the people: as, in  
some

some few instances, has heretofore been the case. But if, through this lust of innovation, you now suffer her forty per poll to be wantonly and injudiciously new-modelled in any such way as is now proposed, centuries may pass before so necessary and useful a reform can be hoped for, on any reasonable ground of expectation.

Instructed by that arch reformer, Henry VIII, our modern invaders of the property of the Church, not contented to rely on the natural fickleness of mankind, and their habitual propensity to *change*, artfully appeal to your selfishness : and thus, by the seducing allurements of some immediate little savings, hope to bring you over to countenance a scheme which will for ever keep down the Church of England. I am astonished her friends have not seen through the plot, and taken the alarm. The Lower House of Assembly appears to be under no such apprehensions : or, if they foresee the fate of the Church, they are contented she should fall. By some logic of their own, their conferees\* have found out, that “ none of our parishes are so inconsiderable but that the worst is too good for the worst Clergyman.” What ! is it the wisdom and the policy of the legislature of Maryland to keep some bad parishes merely for the sake of punishing some bad Clergymen ! Surely, for such men (if such there be) any parish is too good :

\* The term given to those members of the Lower House of Assembly, who were occasionally chosen and deputed to *confer*, on points of moment and difficulty, with the Upper House.

and the punishment is contrived to fall heavier on the poor parishioners than on their undeserving pastor.

To this novel reasoning of the "conferees," permit me, as no un-apt conclusion to this sermon, to apply a passage from a speech of Sir Benjamin Rudyard's, in the House of Commons in 1628.

"For scandalous ministers, there is no man shall  
"be more sincerely desirous to have them punished  
"than I will be. But, sir, let us deal with them as  
"God hath dealt with us; who, before he made man,  
"made the world an handsome place for him to dwell  
"in. So, let us provide for them competent livings,  
"and then punish them in God's name: but, till  
"then, scandalous livings cannot but have scandalous  
"ministers. It shall ever be a rule with me,  
"that where the Church and the Commonwealth  
"are both of the same religion, it is comely and decent  
"that the outward splendour of the Church  
"should bear a proportion and participate in the  
"prosperity of the temporal state: for, why should  
"we dwell in houses of cedar, and suffer God to  
"dwell in skins?"

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It may be proper (though it certainly is mortifying) to add to this discourse, that (as though it had been the fate of its author, like Cassandra, to preach and prophecy in vain) the reduction which it was meant to oppose, soon after it was delivered, passed into a law, so far at least as the Clergy were concerned; with the concurrence, though certainly not with the  
appro-



approbation, of the Governor and the Upper House. They, no doubt, flattered themselves that, by gratifying the popular humour in this point, they should quiet the people on other topics. Just so our ill-fated monarch, Charles I, reasoned with himself, when, in an evil hour, he set his hand to the bill which brought his faithful minister, *Strafford*, to the block.

This bill, by which the Church in Maryland was levelled to the ground, passed in 1772. Far from satiating the ever-craving appetite of the reformers, it encouraged them to proceed in their career: and very soon after they attempted those farther reforms which ended in the destruction of the civil power.

But this policy, one  
of appeasement.

## DISCOURSE VI.

## ON THE TOLERATION OF PAPISTS\*.

## ADVERTISEMENT.

WHEN this Sermon was delivered, the Catholics of Maryland (who were at that time, both in point of property and respectability, of no ordinary weight in the community) seemed to hesitate and to be unresolved what part they should take in the great commotions of their country, which were then beginning. Their principles, no doubt, led them to side with Government; whilst their inclinations, and (as they then thought) their interest, made it their policy to be neutral: but it soon became easy to foresee that neither they, nor any others, would long be permitted to enjoy a neutrality. Important and interesting to them as the decision was, it was a question that could be determined only by prudential considerations. The persons in America who were the most opposed

\* Preached in Queen Anne's Parish, Prince George's County, Maryland, in the year 1774.

to Great Britain, had also, in general, distinguished themselves by being particularly hostile to Catholics ; but then, though dissenters and republicans were their enemies, the friends of Government could hardly be said to be their friends. In America, if they joined Government, all they had to look for was to be bitterly persecuted by one party, and to be deserted by the other. Hence, for some time, they appeared to be wavering and undetermined. This irresolution drew down on them many suspicions, censures, and threats. In order to save them from persecution, and to inspire them with ideas favourable to Government, this discourse was composed.

At length a Catholic gentleman, of good abilities, who was possessed of one of the first fortunes in that country (in short, the Duke of Norfolk, of Maryland), actuated, as was generally thought, solely by his desire to become a public man, for which he was unquestionably well qualified, openly espoused the cause of Congress. Soon after, he became a member of that body. This seemed to settle the wavering disposition of the Catholics of Maryland : under so respectable a leader as Mr. Carroll, they all soon (at least in appearance) became good Whigs, and concurred with their fellow-revolutionists in declaiming against the misgovernment of Great Britain ; nay, they must have concurred in those very declarations which adduced the Quebec Act, by which the Papists in that province (almost the whole of it's inhabitants) were tolerated, as a flagrant instance of her des-



potism and tyranny \*. After this, it is certainly of very inferior moment to mention another instance which shews how true the old observation is, that fresh converts always go the greatest lengths; yet, as it could not but make a strong impresson on the mind of the Author, he cannot forbear relating, that, soon after the delivery of this Sermon, a parishioner of his, who was a Catholic, officiously and eagerly stepped forward as a witness against him, before a committee at Annapolis, where, with great virulence, he preferred a charge, by which it was hoped the Author's inimicality to America might have been proved.

It is a common remark, that, however acceptable the treason may be, even rebels rarely like the traitor. All that the Catholics of Maryland seem yet to have gained by their compliance, is, that they were not driven into exile, nor their property confiscated. I have not heard that they have in general been trusted, like others, by their new allies; much less that they have been distinguished by any favours. Their Leader, indeed, has been a Member of Congress, and was once employed on an embassy: a relation of his, moreover, is now the Popish Bishop in the State. This Bishop is spoken of as a man of worth and abilities; and some things which I have seen of his writing prove that he is a respectable man. Under the prevailing latitudinarian principles of the Government of Maryland, they, like

\* See Almon's Remembrancer, vol. i. p. 141, and 143.

other religionists, are no longer molested on account of their religion; nor are they stigmatised by any legal disqualifications. Still I do not hear of their having any weight or influence, as a body, in the State: so that as to any great privileges of citizenship which they have yet enjoyed, their emancipation (the term which they were soon taught to give to their being taken out of the protection of the Government of Great Britain) has been rather nominal than real.

The impolicy, however, of their new masters is no vindication of that of their old ones. Like far too many ill-informed and ill-judging men of almost all religions, Catholics had not the fortitude to withstand a rebellion which was already begun: but, with all the bad principles respecting Civil Government so frequently imputed to them, they are clear of any suspicion of having begun that in America; nor have they been found to be either refractory or turbulent subjects under a Government of which it is hardly possible that they can cordially approve.

JOHN, ch. iv. ver. 9.

—*for the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans.*

DR. CLARKE is of opinion that this declaration was not made, either by our Saviour, or by the woman at the well with whom he was conversing; but that it is merely an observation of the Evangelist. Be this as it may, it rests on an historical fact of sufficient notoriety. The long and great misunderstanding that subsisted between these two kindred, neighbouring, and united nations, makes no inconsiderable part of their history. It originated with the revolt of Jeroboam: and it must be owned that the Samaritans, who were the descendants of the ten tribes who then went off from the general union, gave the first provocation. But it is remarkable, that the Jews, who were not the offending party, and who also were of the true church, appear, from the text, to have been most active in keeping up the national enmity. That the Samaritans were also indisposed towards the Jews, and never lived in any habits of intimacy or friendly intercourse with them, is more than mere conjecture: for, when our Saviour would have entered into one of their villages, they would not receive him, *because his face was as though*



*he would go to Jerusalem.* No doubt they took him for a Jew going up to Jerusalem, to worship there at the feast of the Passover; and for that reason they withheld from him even the common offices of civility. And here, in the text, the woman, considering our Saviour merely as a Jew, hesitated to give him a little water to quench his thirst.

Man is the creature of prejudice. A writer of no ordinary note\* has taxed the whole system of our education with being merely a scheme to instil prejudices into the infant mind. If by prejudices he meant, as it may be presumed he did, nothing more than opinions taken up on the credit of others, and without any examination of our own, I own I see no reason to be sorry that we cannot deny the charge. For such is the constitution of our nature, and the human mind is so formed for imitation, that it is impossible to keep it unimpressed and uninfluenced by any ideas but such as it has itself previously examined. A thousand notions and opinions are adopted, just as walking, speaking, and other natural habits are, merely from seeing and hearing others advance and avow them. It is therefore of infinite moment, that those to whom the superintendence of our early years is entrusted should be careful (I do not say, not to forbear prejudicing us at all, as that is impossible, but) to prejudice us only in favour of what, as far as human imperfection will permit, we know and believe to be

\* Rousseau.

truth and virtue. Prejudice does not necessarily imply error: but, the misfortune is, man is, in all respects, a fallen and frail creature. More liable at any time to be prejudiced in favour of what is wrong than what is right, we are also, alas! most apt to be most tenacious of what is wrong. Our most unreasonable prejudices are generally the strongest; and it is probably owing to that circumstance that the word has come to be generally understood in a bad sense.

Of all our prejudices, none is more absurd or more mischievous than that common one which is called national prejudice; which leads us to dislike persons, not because they are unwise or unworthy, but because they happen to have been born a few degrees to the north or south of us. As, however, the discussion of this error to any considerable extent might lead me to animadvert on that other great Heathen virtue, the love of our country, from which national prejudice undoubtedly originates, I wave it for the present, and confine myself to the consideration of the more immediate subject of my text, namely, religious prejudices.

When we are persuaded in our own minds of the rectitude of our own opinions, it is not unnatural for us to conclude, that all who do not entertain the same are under a delusion and in an error: and though, of all human infirmities, there is none which, in the eye of reason, is more eminently entitled to be regarded with candour than errors in judgment, it is

not to be denied that there is none which usually meets with less indulgence. But, religious delusions and errors, which should be the most readily pardoned, are, in general, the least so: thoroughly convinced that our own opinions are well founded, we can hardly avoid thinking unfavourably of those who in those points differ from us, and concluding that in differing from us they also deviate from truth. Hence our impatience on such occasions may seem to be founded in a love of God, and a zeal for truth; an anxiety for the public good, and a just concern for the promotion of religion.

But we should consider that neither our own opinions, nor those of other men, are wholly either in our power or theirs. It is every man's duty carefully to examine his opinions, and even his prejudices; to find out, if he can, which of them are well, and which of them ill-founded; that he may retain the former, and reject the latter. Under this bias and this obligation to think and judge for ourselves, our judgments can be determined only by our own convictions. That we shall often judge and determine wrong, is but too probable: but, as we humbly trust that God will forgive such our involuntary errors, it is presumptuous to doubt his being equally ready to forgive others who are equally liable to err. When men have anxiously sought the truth, and sincerely embraced that which after such examination has appeared to them to be true, it would be little less than impious to suppose that they are not innocent



in the sight of God, even though they should still be in error.

But, alas ! it is not thus that man, fallible and frail as we all are, will condescend to think and judge of man. Every man, whose thoughts are not as our thoughts, is to us a *Samaritan*, with whom we resolve to *have no dealings*. We forget that others have just as much right to quarrel with us on the score of our opinions, as we have to quarrel with them for theirs ; that no persons differ more from us than we differ from them ; and that therefore, if there be any fault or offence in a difference of opinion, it is as possible that it may lie on the one side as on the other.

There is not, as far as I can recollect, in all the Scriptures, a single instance of any person's having been censured solely on the ground of his being in error, unless (as indeed was generally the case) an heterodox faith led to a wicked life. Some modern writers (who profess to be the advocates of toleration, whilst themselves are distinguished chiefly for their intolerance towards Christianity) have extolled the mild spirit of Heathenism, as though it had been peculiarly indulgent to persons of different religious creeds. This insinuation, like most of those which are levelled against truth and true religion, is not founded in fact. It is true that the introduction of that wretchedly absurd system of polytheism, for which it is now well known those Romans who were most distinguished entertained almost as little real respect as we do, into the countries which they conquered,

was,

was, in general, but a secondary object with them: but it is also true, that no sooner was their eagle displayed in any of those countries which they added to the empire, than their gods followed. It was reserved for Christian truth to introduce Christian charity (of which this mutual forbearance is an essential part) in full force.

In no part of the world, till Christ came, was it properly understood. If in some countries it was occasionally practised, it owed the little countenance it met with solely to considerations of political expediency; and rarely, if ever, to any sense of duty, or motives of moral propriety. Even in Judea, where the true religion was known, the Scribes and Pharisees in particular cherished and inculcated this narrow notion, that the idolatrous Heathens, the gross followers of the Roman mythology, the apostate Samaritans, were all to be considered as aliens, and enemies to their nation and religion; and therefore meriting the treatment of aliens. But, when the gospel was promulged, all mankind were literally made one people. All the partitions that had so long divided and separated them from each other were broken down: from wickedness and wicked men alone were Christians to be estranged; and that only because, as an apostle speaks, "righteousness can have no fellowship with unrighteousness, nor light any communion with darkness."

The prevailing principle or doctrine of the religion of Jesus is, that all mankind are intimately connected

connected together by their common wants and weaknesses ; and that we are so formed that we cannot exist, at least in society, without mutually assisting and being assisted by each other. In the idea of Christianity, the relation that subsists between man and man is as extensive as our natures ; and the obligations under which we all lie to aid one another by mutual good offices are as strong and urgent as every man's own manifold necessities. According to the different relations by which we stand connected with our fellow-men, some no doubt are better entitled to our love and kindness than others ; but none (no, not even enemies) are to be wholly excluded. To a Christian, every man, how much soever apparently alienated from him by country, kindred, language, or religion, is a neighbour, a friend, and a brother. To give him a title to these endearing distinctions, it is enough that he is a man, and more than enough that he is a Christian.

Besides all the weight which this tenderness towards our fellow-creatures derives from the authority of evangelical precepts, it is still more strongly recommended by the example of our blessed Saviour ; who, if ever he was in any degree rigid and severe towards fallen man, was so only when he found men equally profligate in principle and in practice ; and whenever he spoke of opinions that were merely erroneous, he spoke of them with tenderness and indulgence. Hence, whilst he often taxes the Pharisees with



with their *hypocrisy*, he rarely, if ever, upbraids them with the error of their creed.

It never can be sufficiently lamented that the followers of this perfect pattern of all that was pure, amiable, holy, and good, have not also followed him in this blessed spirit. Of all the calamities which have so long disgraced and distressed the Christian world, those which have arisen from an intolerant and unchristian temper in Christians are the greatest. From this fountain not only *bitter waters*, but streams of blood, have flowed. Millions of martyrs have fallen victims to it; and there is not a Christian nation, whose annals are not stained with some sad history of its baneful consequences. It is far from my purpose to complain of any of those restrictions and disqualifications of persons professing particular opinions and tenets, which our legislatures, in their wisdom, have judged to be necessary: I lament only that it cannot be done without sowing the seeds of jealousy and dissension among us as individuals. No good man can reflect without pain on the necessity which the State is under to make distinctions as to the persons whom it may, or may not, be prudent and safe to trust and employ: but the evil becomes dreadful only when the habit of making such distinctions pervades the private walks of society; crumbling communities into parties and factions, and tearing asunder all the endearing ties of neighbourhood, friendship, and relationship.

It is the fair boast of the present age, that the principles of toleration are carried to an height unknown to former periods. They have spread their happy influence not only through Protestant countries, (which, properly speaking, are Protestant only when they are tolerant,) but have reached the dark and gloomy haunts of superstition and bigotry. Of all Voltaire's multifarious writings, there are none which have done him so much honour as his publications respecting the ill-fated Calas. There is reason to believe also, that our own Locke owes no small portion of his celebrity to his *Treatise on Toleration*. Since their times, a writer can hardly be named, who, whatever his subject has been, has not found occasion to declaim against intolerance.

But dreadful as the spirit of intolerance was in ancient times, it had, however, gained so fast an hold on the Christian world, that it was hardly to be expected a complete reformation could be effected all at once. We acknowledge with gratitude that much has already been done towards it: but much more remains yet to be done. A spirit of tolerance has hitherto manifested itself chiefly in our books and in our conversation: I do not know that it has yet been any where carried into general practice, or any where made the prevailing habitual system and governing principle of our lives.

What may be the character of the world at large, in this respect, it is neither impertinent nor useless for any man to enquire; but all that is of great moment

ment for us to know is how the case stands among ourselves. In profession we are unexceptionable; and, as we say, so no doubt we think, we are equally so in practice. But may it not have happened that in this instance, as well as in others, *we think of ourselves more highly than we ought to think?* There is among us a numerous and respectable body of people, who, if applied to, must, I fear, give a very different testimony concerning us. I mean the descendants of the first settlers of this province; to whose ancestors it was granted expressly as an asylum, where, wearied and worn out with unrelenting persecution, they hoped at length to be permitted to enjoy a respite\*. And here, even in times when toleration was ill understood, and worse practised, when they ceased to have the government of the country in their own hands, they were better protected and more countenanced than their unoffending posterity now are.

I am aware that the toleration of Papists is not among the topics most commonly urged from a Protestant pulpit. But the subject has been forced on me, not only by my having long observed, with much concern, many particular unkindnesses which we are

\* “ Lord Baltimore was a Roman Catholic, and was induced to attempt this settlement in America, in hopes of enjoying liberty of conscience for himself, and for such of his friends to whom the severity of the laws might loosen their ties to their country, and make them prefer an easy banishment with freedom, to the conveniencies of England, embittered as they were by the sharpness of the laws, and the popular odium which hung over them.” — European Settlements in America, vol. ii. p. 226.



all of us far too ready to shew them solely on the score of their religion, but also by some late proceedings\* relating to them which have been the subject of much popular discussion. I am far, however, from being reluctantly driven to it. I feel it to be my duty, not only as a man but as a Christian, and (let me add) more particularly as a Protestant minister of the word of God, to recommend and practise such toleration. And so far am I for apologizing to you for thus publicly taking the part of an injured people, that I confess to you I can hardly help blushing for my brethren that it has been left to me, and I blush for myself that I have not attempted it sooner.

That Papists, in point of doctrine, are far gone in error, I am ready, if need be, again and again to stand forward and to prove. But when, for your sakes, I have heretofore done this, it was to preserve you from their errors, and by no means to exasperate you against their persons. However decided our disapprobation of their tenets may be, I know of no right that we have to constitute ourselves their judges. Is it not misfortune enough to them that our legislature finds itself under a necessity of subjecting them to many legal restrictions and disqualifications? Is not their pertinacious adherence to certain points of doctrine, which seem so clearly to us to be either corrup-

\* This alludes to certain violent resolves of County Committees against Papists; for which the pretence was, what was called, The Quebec Act.

tions or perversions of Scripture, more than a sufficient misfortune to them, without it's being aggravated by any unchristian offices of ours ? Happy as we are in belonging to a Church which (in doctrine at least) may boast of being one of the soundest and purest in Christendom, it is, no doubt, our duty to defend and support it by every means in our power : but if it can be defended only by maligning, ill-using, and persecuting all those who are so unfortunate as to differ from us, in God's name let it want defenders ! for, better will it be even that our Church should fall (were that possible) rather than that Christian charity should be destroyed. No true Church wants such aid ; and least of all the Church of England. If she did, persecution may for a while keep up a false religion, as is the case with respect to Mahometanism : but it always has been, and always will be, injurious to one that is true. In all her long list of objectionable doctrines, none has done such disservice even to the Church of Rome as her intolerance. Some of her own members have had the candour to acknowledge this, and the virtue to lament it.

Wrong principles, and wrong practices, have never belonged exclusively to any particular age, nation, or religion. They are the reproach of every age, every nation, and every religion. There never was a time when none but Roman Catholics were persecutors, or when all Roman Catholics were persecutors. In all churches, as well as in all communities, there have always been weak and wicked men : and though it

it be true that no Christian Church either allows of, or will vindicate, intolerance, I more than fear that all Churches, especially when in power, have been intolerant and persecuting. In one sense, and in some degree, we are intolerant, when, in the common offices of friendly intercourse, we refuse to *have any dealings* with any respectable and worthy men, either as individuals, or in any corporate capacity, merely because they are of a different communion from ourselves.

If, in our private capacities, (for in the eye of reason and law we still act but in our private capacities even when we are members of committees and conventions,) we must needs be intermeddling with the religious concerns of our Papist brethren, let it, I beseech you, be only in the way of compassionate and Christian remonstrance \*. The best way for us to manifest our superiority over them is by shewing, as it is greatly in our power to do, our better faith by (it's only true test) our better works. "We should" (says the ablest advocate† who ever under-

\* "We are too zealously attached to Protestantism not to oppose the errors of the Church of Rome, as well in controversial attacks, as in the more successful way of teaching the doctrines of our Apostolical Church : adhering, at the same time, invariably to the principles of the Reformation, which direct us to oppose error of every kind by argument and persuasion, and to disavow all violence in the cause of religion."—Address of the Archbishop, Bishops, and Clergy of the Province of Canterbury to the King in 1780. See Annual Register for 1781, p. 286.

† Mr. Locke.



took to plead the cause of Toleration and recommend it to mankind) “make use of those arms  
 “only that belong to us as Christians. We should  
 “follow the example of him, *the Prince of Peace*,  
 “who sent out his soldiers to the subduing of nations,  
 “and gathering them into his church, not armed  
 “with the sword, or other instruments of force, but  
 “accounted in that best armour, the gospel of peace,  
 “and the exemplary holiness of Christian conversation.” In religion, all that religion allows is, that we may persuade, but not command; we may press, with arguments, but have no right to force by penalties; we may admonish, exhort, and (if we can) convince a brother of his being in error; and it is our duty to use our best endeavours so to do: but if such means fail, (as, alas, they far too often do!) I know of no authority we have either from reason or from scripture to compel any man even to relinquish error and to embrace truth. Compulsion is not allowed, not only because even in it’s aims it may be unreasonable and unjust, but also because it is the worst way we could possibly take to produce conviction. That is the result of fair and strong argument; whereas all that compulsion can produce is hypocritical conformity. By these means of Christian persuasion, applied with Christian prudence and Christian charity, and by these only, we may hope, in the hands of God, to become the humble but happy instruments of *turning the hearts of the disobedient to the wisdom of the just*. And, O that it would please him,

*him, the Father of mercies, to bring into the way of truth all such as have erred and are deceived! and also, deliver us all from all blindness of heart; from pride, vain glory, and hypocrisy; and from envy, hatred and malice, and all uncharitableness!*

It may deserve to be noticed, that Mr. Locke, from whom some of the strongest of these suggestions in behalf of a more enlarged toleration have been adopted, was far from intending to have them urged in favour of Papists; who have seldom been regarded with the same indulgence as other religious dissentients, either by him, or his followers. But, the arguments are as general as they are just; and not more applicable to dissentients of one description, than they are to all.

The toleration for which I plead is not political, but religious. It is neither asked nor wished that Dissenters of any kind should, as Legislators, receive any new marks of public confidence and esteem: but I am much mistaken if it be not as consistent with sound policy, as it is with Christian charity, to ask and wish that no Dissenter may, in any way, suffer any pains and penalties, merely for being a religious Dissenter. More than this, no reasonable, well-informed, or well-principled Dissenter will ask; and less, no Christian State can consistently think of granting.

The most celebrated political writers concur with the ablest statesmen in all ages and countries in acknowledging, that many and great evils would arise

from a State's shewing equal countenance, and giving equal support, to all religions indiscriminately. Equally fatal to the religion and the morals of the people would be the introduction of that visionary project of some rash theorists, in whose ideal states no preference should be shewn to any particular system of religion \*. One consequence of such a scheme must be the giving countenance, sometimes perhaps to systems unfavourable to good morals, and sometimes (it may be) to systems hostile to the very State by which they are supported, and destructive of all civil authority. The most immediate consequence of

\* It is not without extreme concern I state, that though the project here mentioned might have been supposed too wild even for modern politics to have thought of, it yet was adopted by most of the New States of America. I think it hardly less remarkable, that Dr. Paley speaks of it as entitled, on the whole, to praise rather than to dispraise.—See his *Moral Philosophy*, 4to ed. p. 566. Without entering into a dispute with this great moralist as to the justice or injustice of his opinion on this question, abstractedly considered, I wish it might be determined, as in reason I think it ought to be, from a fair view of the effects it has already had in the States of America. Now, the fact undoubtedly is, (as it was easy to foresee it would be,) that the scheme has already been found to be of the utmost danger to real religion; which, if it goes on much longer, it can hardly fail totally to destroy. I am assured (and on as good authority as the nature of the case admits of) that wherever the experiment has been tried, the people are distinguishable for an indifference and unconcern about all religion. The instances are said to be not a few, of persons who, after having alternately professed themselves of several different religious persuasions, have come at last to avow their total irreligion.



of so hazardous an experiment would be an extreme relaxation of principle, which, under the specious name of liberality of sentiment, would lead directly to latitudinarianism; as that, in its turn, would to indifference about every mode of worship; and thus, in a regular progress, bring on general infidelity and irreligion.

But blessed above all others will those times be, when the three great bodies of Christians, who compose a majority of the people of the British empire, shall *be made one fold under one Shepherd*: when Catholics, Church of England men, and Presbyterians, who all have but one country, may (at least in all its

As far as any clear and certain judgment can be formed, by comparing the exaggerated applauses of interested panegyrists, the published accounts of the proceedings of their ecclesiastical conventions, and other public documents, with the best private information which I have been able to obtain, religion is indeed declining rapidly in many of the States. Those who, during their connexion with Great Britain, were contented to be called Dissenters or Independents, are now pretty generally become, or are becoming, either Universal Restitutionists, Arians or Socinians, or else Philosophers, i. e. Infidels. The few exceptions, who, either from sound sense and settled principles, or long established habits, have not yet been reformed out of all religion, are said to have gone over most generally to the Methodists; but, in some instances, to the Church of England. Add to all this, that as no seminaries of learning, adequate to the education of a Ministry for the whole Continent, have yet been provided by the Public; as no learning, and above all, no theological learning, either yet is, or ever was, held in honour in the United States, there is too much reason to apprehend, that, when the present race of old Ministers is worn out and extinct, their successors may be as illiterate as the people will be irreligious.

great essentials) have but one religion. And were we either as good Christians or as good Subjects as we ought to be, we certainly should (because we easily might) coalesce, and again unite in one general comprehensive plan ; not to promote and support the little partial interests of our own respective societies only, but *for the maintenance of true religion and virtue* at large, whether connected or not connected with establishments, as the governing principle of the community.

Unwilling to *repeat grievances*, I endeavour to forget the long series of oppressions and wrongs which these unfortunate people have suffered among us. Hardly a book on any article of religion has been written ; hardly a sermon on any controverted point has been preached ; hardly any public debates, or private conversations, have been held on the subject of religion or of politics, in which (in the strange phrase of a \* noted puritan of the last century) the parties have not contrived to have what he called "*a thwack at Popery.*" We have exhibited them, as some of their own communion are wont to exhibit those they call *heretics*, in an *auto da fe* ; in an horrid dress disfigured with monsters and devils : or as an emperor of Rome, distinguished for his cruelty, is said to have exhibited the primitive Christians, when he wrapped them in the skins of beasts, and then threw them into the arena to be torn and devoured by

\* Daniel Burgefs.

lions. "I wish," (says the learned Bishop Sanderson in his first Sermon to the Clergy,) "I wish there had  
 " been no advantage given them (the Papists) for  
 " triumphing in their innocency, and for persisting  
 " in their obstinacy, by some men's unjust scoffing at  
 " them. It cannot but be some confirmation to men  
 " in error to see men of dissolute and loose behaviour,  
 " with much violence and eagerness, and petulancy,  
 " speak against them. We know how much scandal  
 " and prejudice it is to a right good cause, to be  
 " either followed by persons open to just exception,  
 " or maintained with slender and insufficient reasons,  
 " or *prosecuted with unreasonable and indiscreet violence.*"

Proud of the suffrage of this learned and venerable Prelate, I am hardly less flattered by finding the clear, distinct, and impartial Mosheim also declaring, that "more charity in the reformed would greatly  
 " contribute to heal the breach, and diminish the  
 " weight and importance of those controversies  
 " which separate them from the communion of the  
 " Romish Church."

Bigots of all communions are the same: and none are less charitable, or more intolerant, than certain declaimers \* against Popery; who yet incessantly rail at Papists for their intolerance and bigotry. It was not, therefore, without some indignation that I have lately seen a less liberal commentator † artfully en-

\* Quis tulerit Gracchos de seditione querentes?—Juv.

† Archdeacon Blackburn.



deavouring to explain away the observation of this eminent foreigner. Even this bitter enemy to Papists, however, thinks it sufficient to assail Popery, not with open, sober, serious, and solid argument, but by insinuations and sarcasms thrown out with such a spirit of intemperance as even Papists might be ashamed of. Somewhere, in his Confessional, he casts a sneer on Archbishop Wake, on account of his truly Catholic and Christian correspondence with Du Pin, respecting an union between the Gallican and British Churches. Regardless either of the insinuations or the open censures of all such bigots, I hesitate not to give it as my decided opinion, that a re-union of Protestants and Papists, on almost any terms, is an event for which all good Christians are bound most cordially to pray. Nay, I go still farther, and add, that, to effect so good a purpose as the destruction of sects and parties, and the disunion of men on the score of religion in these realms, I should feel but little reluctance to make some sacrifices both to Popery and Presbyterianism. If I at all know my own heart, or the state of my own mind, I am, on conviction, a sincere member of the Church of England : yet am I not so blindly partial as to think every thing wrong either in the Church of Rome, or in that of Scotland. On the supposition of a general re-union, they would have much to give up ; and we too (I humbly think) not a little. Independently of the strong motive of once more re-uniting us, I am far from pretending to be sure that it would not be

right

right in us to do so ; because (to use the words of a great writer, \* roundly condemned by the Confessionalist) “ perhaps a middle state between what the “ Church once was, and what it now is, may be the “ condition most desirable.”

In Leslie's Regale you may find a proposal and a plan for a general union between the Church of England, Catholics, and Dissenters. The author of the Confessional calls the scheme a “ chimæra ;” and the proposer of it “ a nonjuror,” and contemptible.” That he was a non-juror his warmest admirers will not deny, any more than the bitterest of his enemies can deny that some of the wisest, most learned, and best men of his age were also non-jurors. But that Leslie was, in any point of view, “ contemptible,” is a charge that will be hazarded by those only who have never read his works ; or who, having read them, have not themselves either learning or liberality sufficient to enable them to judge of their merit. Those works will live, and be admired, and do good, when the captious and splenetic productions of such writers as the Confessionalist shall long have been consigned to merited oblivion. If Leslie's project was chimerical, it was so only from his thinking too well of his fellow-creatures. Let mankind but cease to be chimerical ; let them but learn to pursue realities with the same ardour with which they now pursue shadows ; let them but once

\* The eminent Mr. Charles Leslie.

find out that their true interest is to do that which it is their duty to do, and Leslie's project will no longer be chimerical.

And whenever, through God's mercy, so blessed an event shall take place, then (to use this great man's words) "will those many and pious men in the  
" Church of Rome, who have laboured, and still do  
" with for a reformation among themselves, but dare  
" not push it on for fear of splitting on the rock on  
" which they suppose we have split, viz. the being  
" torn to pieces by sects and parties, gladly avow  
" what they now secretly but sincerely approve in  
" our reformation; and we shall find no scruple to  
" amend what we find amiss on our side: and on  
" all sides, such a temper will be put on, as to give  
" us a prospect of a more glorious reformation than  
" ever the Church has seen since Constantine first  
" turned Christian \*."

Well-instructed Protestants lament and blame this un-protestant behaviour of too many of their brethren. Averse to the treating of Papists with asperity and rancour, they are contented to let their enmity fall on Popery. In strength and fairness of argument, our best Protestant writers have given Catholics no cause of complaint; excepting perhaps that their arguments have so often been unanswerable. On no point of religion has so much been written, as there has on the Popish controversy; nor,

\* Leslie's Regale, folio, p. 657.



as I am proud to add, so well : and thus much, I believe, no ingenuous Catholics would hesitate to own. The superiority of our arguments might long ago have brought them into our Church, had they not been kept out by our want of charity. That Catholics in general think Protestants in general unreasonably prejudiced, and unjustifiably bitter against Catholics, is certain : I hope indeed that they think worse of us than we really deserve ; but we cannot deny that we have given them some cause to think and speak of us as they do. And this their opinion of us, whether well or ill-founded, is the greatest, if not the only reason, why Protestantism has yet made so little progress in Catholic countries, and why Popery still has so many votaries among ourselves \*.

There was no need thus to misrepresent Papists. Every man of a clear and uncorrupted understanding must naturally revolt at the unaggravated deformity of many of their tenets. Their corruptions have been pointed out with such irresistible demonstration, that I can account for their not being generally rejected in no other way so probably as by assigning

\* “Ce n'est donc pas sans raison, qu'un Deïste (Rousseau) irrité contre ses freres les Protestans, leur a soutenu, que la Reforme a été intolérante dès son origine ; et que les Reformateurs sont promptement devenus Protecteurs.”

“Nous prions nos adversaires de citer une ville, une bourgade, un village, où les novateurs, devenus les maîtres, aient souffert un seul Catholique.”—Bergier, *Traité de la vraie Religion*, tom. 10, p. 416.

it to the cause just mentioned. It is no uncommon case for men to find friends and support, not so much on the score of their own merit, as from the demerit of those who oppose them. This I believe to be the case with Papists; since, as to them, we seem to be Protestants only in theory: in the worst and most odious features of Popery, we are still unreformed; we are bigots, uncharitable and intolerant; we are persecutors; in short, we are *Jerws, and have no dealings with the Samaritans.*

I do not exaggerate. This narrowness of spirit is discernible, not only in our dealings with Papists as individuals, but even in the temper and tenor of our laws. "Our Government" (as Mr. Locke acknowledges) "has not only been partial in matters of religion, but partial in the pains and penalties inflicted on Papists. We have need of more generous remedies than what have yet been made use of in our distemper. It is neither declarations of indulgence, nor acts of comprehension, such as have yet been practised or projected among us, that can do the work. The first will but palliate, the second increase our evil. Absolute liberty, just and true liberty, *equal and impartial* liberty, is the thing that we stand in need of."

It is not in charge against us, that we now persecute this unhappy people with fire and faggot, which have too often been their own weapons. This (blessed be God!) the mild temper of the times would not endure. But, we subject them to unnecessary,

cessary, unreasonable, and unjust restrictions and disqualifications : and every kind of discountenance or discouragement, which is not absolutely necessary, is a species of persecution. Their subjection, however, to strict tests, and exclusion from certain places of high trust and importance, are far from coming under this description. Every well-constituted State must and will give a preference to some particular system of religion ; and of course will select for it's preference that which it esteems the best. If any of it's members disapprove of and dissent from the system thus preferred and patronized by the State (which is one great evil resulting from a great good, some diversity in our creeds being hardly avoidable in a free State,) whilst they are tolerated in their dissent, they may lament, but cannot blame, that they are subjected to some degree of discountenance and discouragement. The State is answerable only for any unnecessary excess of such discouragements ; to God, if it exceeds the bounds of humanity and Christian charity ; and to the community, if it be impolitic\*.

That

\* Sir Richard Steele, in a letter to his wife, (see his Works, vol. i. p. 149.) takes notice of her having heard a report that he was a Tory. The reason which he supposes to have occasioned such a report is curious, and the more curious as coming from so staunch a Whig. " You know I have an unfashionable thing called " conscience in all matters of judicature or justice."

He goes on to relate the particular occasion of this report, as follows : " There happened, a little while ago, a petition to be " brought into the House of Commons from the Roman Catholics, " praying



That every kind of persecution is injurious to religion, and therefore displeasing to God, has already been shewn. There is, in short, and can be but one good reason for subjecting Dissenters of any denomination to any civil restraints ; and that is, because the admitting them to a full participation of some peculiar privileges is incompatible with the general welfare. That it is as necessary and as proper thus to discountenance Papists, as it is any other Dissenters, I am not so much their advocate as to dispute : but I do contend, that Papists should, both of right and in point of prudence, be put upon a footing in this respect with other Dissenters. It has, I am aware, frequently been asserted, and with confidence, (but I own for one that I at least have never yet seen it satisfactorily proved,) that Papists hold any tenets more dangerous to the State, than many that are held by

“praying relief as to point of time, and the meaning of certain  
 “clauses which affected them. When there was a question just  
 “ready to be put upon this, as whether it should be rejected or not,  
 “I stood up and said to this purpose :

“Mr. Speaker,

“I cannot but be of opinion, that, to put severities upon men,  
 “merely on account of religion, is a most grievous and unwarrantable  
 “able proceeding. But, indeed, the Roman Catholics hold tenets  
 “which are inconsistent with the being and safety of a Protestant  
 “people : for this reason we are justified in laying upon them the  
 “penalties which Parliament from time to time has thought fit to  
 “infiict. But, sir, let us not pursue Roman Catholics with the  
 “spirit of Roman Catholics, but act towards them with the temper  
 “of our own religion.”

other

other Separatists ; who yet are treated (not, perhaps, with all the lenity and forbearance which good policy and Christian charity would extend to them, but certainly) with a much more liberal toleration than has ever yet been shewn to Papists : and yet, excepting in the prejudices of mankind, I own I see no reason for an instance of partiality so mortifying to men who have not deserved to be so mortified. How far it is necessary, wise, or just in a State thus continually to sacrifice it's own better judgment and better principles to such prejudices, the State best knows. I hope it is no presumptuous interference in State affairs for an obscure individual to say, that it appears to be, most palpably, an unchristian policy ; and if it be unchristian, it is also unwise \*.

Some

\* ————“ It is not to Popery that the laws object, but to Popery as the mark of Jacobitism ; an equivocal, indeed, and fallacious mark, but the best and perhaps the only one that can be devised. But it should be remembered, that as the connection between Popery and Jacobitism, which is the sole cause of suspicion, and the sole justification of those severe and jealous laws which have been enacted against the professors of that religion, was accidental in it's origin, so probably it will be temporary in it's duration ; and that these restrictions ought not to continue a day longer than some visible danger renders them necessary to the preservation of the public tranquillity.”——Paley's Moral Philosophy, 4to. p. 584.

“ It seemeth reasonable and dutiful to grant what his Majesty desireth may be done for him, viz. to take off the sanguinary laws concerning religion, in so far as they infer the pains of death or forfeiture against those of his persuasion merely for their religion ;  
“ and

Some of the most exceptionable dogmas held by Catholics, and those which may be supposed most likely to excite the jealousy of the Legislature, are those which we tax them with holding on the subject of Civil Government. If our allegations are well founded, Papists are, in general, not only friends to the abdicated family that have so long and so idly *pretended* to the throne of these realms, but also are, from principle,

“and that the Papists have an ease and immunity from the execution of the other penalties, civil or criminal, contained in the laws, merely and alienably for their religion, and exercise of their worship in private houses. This seemeth to us, who are not lawyers, to be equitable and reasonable to be done, considering that the execution of sanguinary laws has fallen into an absolute desuetude for many years past; and since, upon doing hereof, his Majesty is so gracious as not to intend or desire the repealing of any laws already made for the security of the Protestant religion, but is willing further to establish and confirm the same, by any other laws or acts of Parliament that can be made for that end. Nor do we see any danger or insecurity arising to our religion by so doing, but rather an apparent benefit, by his Majesty’s consenting to a more full and ample security thereof. And this is but our own private opinion, for we cannot undertake to say that this would be the opinion of others. For, as we are clearly determined, by God’s grace, to continue firm and constant in the reformed Protestant religion to our lives’ end, so also are we to serve our most gracious Sovereign, and to comply with his proposals and desires, as far as they do consist with the safety of our consciences and religion, upon which we assure ourselves his Majesty’s grace and goodness will never impose.”—From the Address of Primate Ross of St. Andrews, and Bishop Patterson of Edinburgh, to James the Second. See Skinner’s Ecclesiastical History of Scotland, vol. 2, p. 499.



ciple, partial to despotism, and favourers of arbitrary power. As for the first of these charges, an attachment to the race of the Stuarts, supposing it to be as general as is alledged, still it is by no means confined to Papists. It has been remarked of that family, that, among it's other striking peculiarities, no royal personages ever were distinguished by having so many friends of great merit personally attached to them. Readily admitting, however, that the fidelity of Papists to the most unfortunate race of monarchs that ever sat on a throne reflects perhaps no credit on their worldly wisdom, I neither can nor will so tamely accede to a low and vulgar prejudice, as also to admit that

The old laws of England against Papists, though of that sanguinary kind (as Montesquieu observes,) that they do all the harm that can possibly be done in cold blood, may yet be sufficiently accounted for, (if not in some degree extenuated,) when we refer them to the urgency of the times in which they were enacted. Blackstone (b. iv. c. 4.) justly observes, that “the restless machinations of the Jesuits during the reign of Elizabeth, the turbulence and uneasiness of the Papists under the new religious establishment, and the boldness of their hopes and wishes for the succession of the Queen of Scots, obliged the Parliament to counteract so dangerous a spirit, by laws of a great and then perhaps necessary severity. The powder-treason in the succeeding reign struck a panic into James I. which operated in different ways: it occasioned the enacting of new laws against the Papists; but deterred him from putting them in execution. The intrigues of Queen Henrietta in the reign of Charles I, the prospect of a Popish successor in that of Charles II, the assassination plot in the reign of King William, and the avowed claim of a Popish Pretender to the crown in that and subsequent reigns, will account for the inten-

that it does them any real dishonour. However fashionable it long has been, and still may be, to run down this truly illustrious family, it should not be forgotten, that, for a long series of years, they shone the pride and the glory of Europe. Whilst other crowned heads, in the unpropitious periods of feudal domination, were ambitious only to be feared by their vassals, it was the honourable pride of the Stuarts to be beloved by their subjects. In ages of barbarism they became eminent, by their being not only lovers of learning, but men of learning: yet, by an uncommon fatality, one of them, the most distinguished

“tion of these penalties at those several periods of our history.” The learned commentator very humanely adds: “But if a time should ever arrive, and perhaps it is not very distant, when all fears of a Pretender shall have vanished, and the power of the the Pope shall become feeble, ridiculous, and despicable, not only in England, but every kingdom of Europe; it probably would not then be amiss to review and soften these rigorous edicts.” This period is now happily arrived; and it is not now in the power of every merciless bigot to drag down the vengeance of the law upon inoffensive though mistaken subjects. By the Stat. 31 Geo. III, c. 32, which may be called the Toleration Act of Roman Catholics, all the severe and cruel restrictions and penalties are removed from those Roman Catholics who are willing to comply with the requisitions of the statute; which are, that they shall appear at one of the Courts of Westminster, or at the Quarter Sessions of their county, and subscribe a declaration, that they profess the Roman Catholic religion; and that they shall take the oath of allegiance to his Majesty, abjuration of the Pretender, and renunciation of the Pope’s civil power; and abhorrence of the doctrines of destroying and not keeping faith with heretics, and deposing or murdering Princes excommunicated by authority of the see of Rome.

among

among them all for every thing that does honour to man in an enlightened age, lost his life on a scaffold, murdered by his own subjects. Since the extinction of the race, they have become the objects almost of national abhorrence, not because that, of the two last kings of their family, the one was an abandoned profligate, and the other a wretched bigot; but because, during all their reigns, both they and their subjects supported those high principles of prerogative which are now known only by their being the invariable topics of popular declamation. Still, however, amidst all the vicissitudes of their history, every impartial man (now when at length we may, without subjecting ourselves to any mean and foolish suspicions of an undue attachment, examine into and judge of their characters as we do of those of the Plantagenets or the Tudors) must acknowledge, that many of the kings of the Stuart race were distinguished both by their abilities and their virtues; and every man capable of feeling, however he may rejoice that they are no longer our monarchs, will sympathize with them in their unparalleled misfortunes.

As to the proneness of Papists to submit tamely to arbitrary power, even if the allegation were true, I own I cannot see why it should expose them at least to the displeasure of kings, and those *that are put in authority under them*: inasmuch as such a principle, however abject it may be deemed, is certainly not calculated to overthrow, or even to disturb, the peace of, any settled government. But the charge is com-



pletely disproved, not only by the express disavowal of those against whom it is alledged, but by the well-known practice of thousands of individuals, as well as of sundry large communities. It is the general fault of disputants to pick out, and lay a stress on, objections not solid but popular: Papists must therefore count on having it always thrown in their teeth, that they are more disposed than other men to crouch to tyrants, not because the objectors believe it to be true, but because they know the objection bids fair to be well received by the multitude. Time was when Papists no doubt held many exceptionable opinions respecting Government, as well as on other topics: nor dare I indulge the hope, that, even yet, all Papists are exempted from all erroneous opinions on the subject of Government. But they were not Papists only, who doted on the scholastic dreams of a dark age. Nor has that glorious effusion of intellectual light, which we boast has been so amply and so generally spread abroad in the present age, been wholly hid from Papists. There are, all over the world, and certainly among ourselves, many members of the Church of Rome, who protest as vehemently against all illiberal and servile dogmas as the staunchest Protestant among us can do: and books might be referred to, written by Catholics, so eager in the cause of liberty as to satisfy (if on that topic any thing within the boundaries of common sense can satisfy) even American Sons of Liberty. The fact is, Catholics, like all other men, are, in their practice, not  
seldom

seldom at variance with their profession. Of course (whilst they conceive themselves to be in this respect as much at their liberty as we are) there is nothing very surprising in our finding, among Papists, many who have written both for and against all the various notions about Government which have ever prevailed in any of the civilized countries in which Catholics have lived. If there be one principle which the Catholic Church inculcates with more earnestness than another, it is the Christian doctrine of obedience. As long, therefore, as they act consistently with their religion, they must be the friends of settled government, and adverse to revolts and rebellion : no less inclined to defend republicanism, when that is the established form of government under which they live, as it is in the Catholic cantons of Switzerland, than they are to defend monarchy in France, Spain, or Portugal. And surely, as loyal subjects, the people of those kingdoms are blameless\*. It has been affirmed, that, in the last century, there were once no less than thirty general officers, all Catholics, in the service of the king : and a challenge was made, in their sovereign's presence, for any man to name a single Catholic who had been false to him. And I

\* The Reader is requested to recollect, that this was written more than twenty years ago ; when it was generally thought infinitely less probable that the powerful kingdom of France should ever be frittered down into a paltry republic, than, even at this moment, it is that, after a short but dreadful delirium, they should again become a great and happy people under a grand monarch.

must take upon me again to assert, that their disinterested and unshaken fidelity to the unfortunate House of Stuart, however mistaken, will, in the opinion of every man of honour, do them honour. Their sufferings prove at least their sincerity. And the sacrifices they still make, for conscience sake, of many worldly advantages, is such an instance of firmness in a conscientious adherence to what they believe to be the truth, as, it must be allowed, cannot be said of all their opposers.

To bring this matter to a short issue. Thoroughly persuaded and convinced, as Catholics in general, as well as Protestants in general, now are in their judgments and their consciences, of the right of the family now on the throne to the crown of these realms, let an oath of allegiance, acknowledging that right, and pledging themselves to support and defend it, be framed, in terms as strong as the most suspicious of their adversaries can devise; if it does not trench on extrinsic matters, which have no connexion with the duties of allegiance;—I will answer for them, (and I do so not without some authority,) that they will rejoice to have an opportunity of taking it. And if hereafter they be found disloyal or unfaithful subjects, or in any way disobedient to the laws of the land, let them, in God's name, be punished accordingly. All they ask, and all that I presume to ask for them, is, that they may not for ever be deprived of the common privileges of good subjects, merely on suspicions.

There



There have been, and probably there still are, among the great body of the Catholics, as there are in other communities, men who, on points which their Church has neither defined nor decided, entertain different, erroneous, and perhaps dangerous, opinions : nor can it be either doubted or denied that many Catholics have avowed and promulged tenets and dogmas incompatible with good order and the peace of the world, and therefore not fit to be tolerated. But such cases are not fairly chargeable on all Catholics, and still less on their religion : “ since  
 “ none of all the undoubted either articles or rites,  
 “ which all Roman Catholics universally, without  
 “ any distinction of party or faction, do and must  
 “ espouse, have been hitherto reputed, accused, or  
 “ suspected of being (in themselves abstractedly and  
 “ purely taken) in any manner dangerous to any  
 “ government temporal or spiritual, or to any persons  
 “ either of princes or subjects, or to the property or  
 “ liberty of any man or woman, or to the peace, or  
 “ quiet, or security, or content, of any human crea-  
 “ ture ; however, in the mean time, several, or some  
 “ of them, do or may, seem erroneous to the learned,  
 “ conscientious, Protestants\*.”

Protestant

\* See “ The History and Vindication of the Loyal Formulary, or Irish Remonstrance,” by PETER WALSH : a book to which, if I were a Catholic, I think I could object only for it's being perhaps almost too Protestant. It is a book which all Protestants, who really wish to know the true state of the case between Protestants and Papists, certainly ought to read : and whatever it

Protestant Divines have thrown away much learning and skill in refuting notions and pretensions, on which, even in times the least auspicious to learning, intelligent Catholics never laid much stress. The minds and manners of the Clergy both Protestant and Catholic, like those of other men, cannot but receive some tincture from the prevailing manners of the age in which they live. It is no wonder, then, that, in dark and ignorant ages, some of their writings were ignorant and absurd. But, every well-informed and liberal-minded man, instead of for ever dinning

proves, or fails to prove, it will at least produce this conviction in men of candid minds, that all Papists have not always been bigots, or intolerant.

Since this Sermon and the above Note were written, two other Vindications of Catholics, by Catholics, have been published; written, both of them, I had almost said, with the abilities, but certainly with the spirit and with the candour of WALSH, who lived in the last century. These are :

Berrington's State and Behaviour of English Catholics, &c. 1780.

Butler's Justification of the Tenets of the Roman Catholic Religion, &c. 1787.

To these I rejoice that I can add Father O'Leary's truly Catholic Tracts.

But, to the Catholic Protestant who may yet wish for farther satisfaction respecting the toleration of Papists, I beg leave to recommend a Protestant writer, who, on this subject, as well as on almost every other on which he has written, has left little to be added by any that come after him. This is the celebrated Bp. Jeremy Taylor's noted Treatise on "The Liberty of Prophecy;" and particularly the 20th section of it, in which it is inquired, "how far the Religion of the Church of Rome is tolerable."

the ears of Papists with vague imputations of monkish ignorance ; instead of *visiting the sins of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation*, as if they had been laid under some irrevocable interdiction, and that we were never to have any connection or friendship with them\* ; instead of all such low and unworthy prejudices, men really enlightened and really liberal will remember, and acknowledge with gratitude, that, chiefly to Papists do we owe the preservation of ancient literature ; that, in times of general anarchy and violence, the Romish Clergy alone gave such cultivation to letters as the unimproved state of society then admitted of ; and that, in the cloisters of cathedrals, and in the solitude of monasteries, they opened schools of public instruction, and, to men of retired and studious minds, asylums from the turbulence of war. It was thus that Papists, and even Popish priests, by gradually opening and enlarging the human mind, prepared the way for the Reformation ; which has been a blessing, not to Protestants only, but to the whole Christian world. The Church of Rome, as well as every other Church and Society, partakes of that general increase of light and liberality, to the credit of which, with all it's levity, and all it's false science, the present age is undoubtedly in many respects entitled : and she too, along

\* . . . . . " Genus omne futurum

" Exercete odii . . . . .

" . . . . . nullus amor populis, nec fœdera sunt."

Virg. *Æn.* lib. iv. l. 622.



with others, has in these latter times in many particulars greatly reformed herself, and is daily reforming.

If any man of an unprejudiced and ingenuous mind, forgetting for a moment that he is either a Protestant or a Papist, will sit down, and read the Popish controversy, I can almost answer for his rising up with this conviction strongly impressed on his mind, that Protestants have hardly shewn themselves more superior to their adversaries in point of argument, than Papists have in good temper and good manners. When Catholics write or speak of Protestants, we are always mentioned with decency, if not with respect: whereas we very rarely notice them, without bestowing on them some harsh and offensive epithet. For the advantage which, in our controversy with them, we certainly have over them, we are indebted almost entirely to the goodness of our cause, and the learning of our writers: but there is reason to fear, that what Papists thus lose they recover by their greater moderation in controversy.

Let a reverend "Considerer \* of the present State of Popery" set me down, if so he pleases, among the "seemingly cool and candid, but certainly injudicious and perhaps designing lookers on," who think "the alarms concerning the progress and increase of this dangerous superstition have been chimerical;" I must be contented to bear his sneers and his cen-

\* Mr. Archdeacon Blackburn.

tures; for I cannot bring myself to surrender to him, or to any man, either my common sense, or my Christian charity. I claim to be as anxious for the suppression of error, and the propagation of truth, as he or any man can be: and though I hope never to be so clamorous, I resolve to be as earnest, a stickler for the right of private judgment, as any of the numerous and noisy tribe who so perpetually stun the world with their declamations against tests and subscriptions. Actuated by these sentiments, I also, in my turn, beg leave to say, what I sincerely think, that the progress of truth has been much impeded by the *injudiciousness*, and perhaps by the *designs*, of such narrow-minded bigots as the Confessionalist, who, with the cant of candour for ever in their mouths, are eminent chiefly for their rancour and malignity against all those who dare presume to think otherwise than they think. It is particularly remarkable in writers of this stamp, that, when engaged in controversy, not contented with exaggerating, they seldom fail to distort and misrepresent the tenets and the arguments of their opponents. This is the more provoking, as it is sure to be accompanied with the most elaborate encomiums on their own unequalled liberality.

That Papists, as counted by the poll, have increased in the British dominions, this author very confidently asserts. It may be true, though I own that it is contrary to what I conceive to be the fact. But I aver, in my turn, that those tenets in Popery which are justly deemed most superstitious and most dangerous,

are

are every where losing ground : and this being the case, it is fair to assert, that Popery, as we understand the term, is on the decline. In this province (which, with respect to America in general, is certainly the strong hold of Popery) the general opinion is that Papists have decreased and are decreasing. Of the truth or falsehood of this matter, Papists themselves are most likely to be the best judges ; and they acknowledge that their numbers are on the decline. This they very rationally ascribe to that better treatment which they have of late years experienced from Protestants. Who, then, can help regretting, that any thing should have occurred, just at this particular crisis, to tempt some *injudicious* and perhaps *designing* men among us to recommend it to us again to treat them with suspicion and distrust ; and this too in the very moment when we were reaping, or were about to reap, the best fruits from a contrary conduct \* ?

We

\* In September 1660, the Lord Chancellor (the celebrated Earl of Clarendon) made a speech to the two Houses of Parliament on their adjournment ; which, like all his productions, is not only in itself excellent, but particularly applicable to the subject of this sermon.

“ Gentlemen, the distempers of religion, which have so much disturbed the peace of this kingdom, is a bad argument indeed : it is  
 “ a consideration that must make every religious heart to bleed, to  
 “ see religion, which should be the strongest cement and obligation  
 “ of affection, and brotherly kindness, and compassion, made now,  
 “ by the perverse wranglings of passionate and froward men,  
 “ the ground of all animosity, malice, hatred, and revenge. And  
 “ this unruly and unmanly passion (which no doubt the Divine  
 “ nature



We all know (and though we forgive, we hope never to forget) what Protestants have from time to time suffered from Papists. But what Protestant dares to assure himself that, were Papists disposed to retaliate, they could not shew us as long and as bloody a catalogue of Papists who have bled under Protestant hands? Of whatever religion a man may be, he must read such histories with sorrow and shame. They are the just reproach of both parties: and much are

“ nature exceedingly abhors) sometimes, and I fear too frequently, “ transports those who are in the right as well as those who are in “ the wrong, and leaves the latter more excusable than the former, “ when men who find their manners and dispositions very conforma- “ ble in all the necessary obligations of human nature, avoid one “ another’s conversation, and grow first unfociable, and then un- “ charitable to each other, because one cannot think as the other “ doth. And from this separation we entitle God to the patronage “ of, and concernment in, our fancies and distinctions, and purely “ for his sake hate one another heartily.

“ It was not so of old, when one of the most ancient Fathers of “ the Church tells us, that love and charity were so signal and “ eminent in the primitive Christians, that it even drew envy and “ admiration from their greatest adversaries. *Vide, inquit, ut in- “ vicem se diligant.* Their adversaries in that in which they most “ agreed, in their very persecution of them, had their passions and “ animosities among themselves; they were only Christians, that “ loved, and cherished, and were ready to die for one another. “ *Quid nunc dicerent illi Christiani, si nostra viderent tempora?* says the “ incomparable Grotius. How would they look upon our sharp “ and violent contentions in the debates of Christian religion, and “ the bloody wars that have proceeded from those contentions, “ whilst every one pretended to all the marks which attend upon “ the true Church, except only that which is inseparable from it, “ charity to one another?”

they

they both concerned to make all the amends in their power for the injury thus done to our common Christianity. If, in our English history, there be one epoch which we emphatically execrate, it is the bloody reign of bloody Mary. But is there not another Mary, whose tragical history must even be interesting to every heart capable either of sympathy or sentiment? Mary, Queen of Scotland, one of the most amiable monarchs that ever wielded a sceptre, was persecuted with a most unrelenting rancour by her Protestant subjects: and the best informed and most faithful of her historians, though Protestants, have owned that she owed her sufferings in no small degree to her being a Papist. I do not know that it is now possible to ascertain how many Papists lost both their estates and their lives because they adhered to the last James, who owed the loss of his crown to no one cause so much as he did to his religion: but I would not, even if I could, now recount all the plots and crimes with which Protestants, in certain periods of our history, on very insufficient grounds, have charged Papists. Surely the world has now seen too much of the mischievousness of such practices ever to countenance them again.

Protestants of the Church of England are particularly unwise in keeping up this groundless grudge against those from whom it is our boast that we ourselves have sprung. Already is our Church rent and torn, in the most unseemly and piteous manner, by sects and sectaries of almost every name. These  
schisms,

schisms, the members of the Catholic Church ascribe (not, I hope, on such grounds as cannot be refuted, but certainly on such as cannot easily be refuted) in a great measure to the manner in which our own reformation was begun and carried on. However these breaches were made, the healing them is what all Christians must and do pray for; and it is undoubtedly the interest as well as the duty of Christians of all persuasions to promote it. Now, I cannot too often, nor too earnestly, endeavour to inculcate on your minds the strong conviction which I have on my own, that no measure is so likely to put an end to schisms and sects as a reconciliation and coalition between Catholics and Protestants of the Church of England\*. Many wise and good men of both Churches have long wished for such an event: and though it is too probable that such an union would be opposed, not only by bigots of all denominations, but by the whole body of Dissenters, to whose existence dissent seems to be essential; yet Dissenters are no where, nor in any sense, so considerable as to be entitled to dictate to all the rest of the community. We should recollect too, that though

\* "If Popery and Protestantism were permitted to dwell quietly together, Papists might not become Protestants, (for the name is commonly the last thing that is changed,) but they would become more enlightened and informed; they would, by little and little, incorporate into their Creed many of the tenets of Protestantism, as well as imbibe a portion of its spirit and moderation."—Paley's Moral Philosophy, 4to. p. 580.

Presbyterians



Presbyterians are every where ignorantly and unjustly confounded with sectaries of a different description under the general name of Dissenters, the former agree with the latter only in their dissent from the Church of England : and as to the points most likely to be affected by such an union as is here suggested, there certainly is a much greater difference between the old, regular, Presbyterians and Modern Dissenters, than there is between Presbyterians and Churchmen. Agreeing in this fundamental principle, as the members of the respective Churches of England, Scotland, and Rome, all do, that religion is most safe under the shelter and guardianship of a national establishment, there is reason to hope that, in the present temper of the world, if an authorised and legal conference of some leading persons among each of the three parties above mentioned could be brought about, they might form, if not a complete union, yet some general consolidating plan, in which a majority of their respective people would be happy to concur. The aim of such a plan would be to promote, not the particular interests of any of our particular Churches, but the interests of Christianity at large ; and, above all, to prevent for the future those many and great evils which arise from dissensions and contests.

Unawed by the apprehension of it's being imputed to me that I am *edging towards Popery* \*, I have no reluctance to declare, that Catholics seem to me to

\* Archdeacon Blackburn.

have no slight claims on us on the score of gratitude. For, were they not Catholics who obtained the Magna Charta; who laid all the broad and firm foundation of this unparalleled structure of liberty, the British Constitution; who enacted most of our best laws; who erected so many of the noble edifices which do so much honour to the Parent State; who built and endowed almost all the national churches, and founded not only many eminent public schools, but also the two universities? These were great, substantial, and durable services, and such as justly entitle those who performed them to the appellation of great men. I will not degrade them by a comparison with the puny efforts and wordy services of later times; for which, however, places, pensions, and titles, have been lavishly bestowed. The descendants of those great men *in the old times before us*, the Papists of our own times, are no longer in any capacity of emulating the greatness of their ancestors: but their fortitude, under trials of peculiar poignancy, is almost as unexampled as their oppressions; and their acquiescence under a long series of accumulated wrongs, is such an instance of true patriotism as entitles them to the highest respect. With a patient firmness of character, worthy of all praise and of all imitation, they have long submitted to such injuries and indignities as their high-spirited forefathers would have ill-brooked, and such as their undegenerate posterity would not endure, were it not that they have the wisdom and the virtue to respect the laws more than their own personal feel-

ings. Every thing most dear to the human heart has been torn from them, excepting their attachment to their religion, and their determination still to *love and bless* those fellow-subjects, who, unmindful of the duties resulting from their religion, and unmoved by so endearing an example, foolishly and wickedly continue to regard Papists as Samaritans, with whom they resolve to *have no dealings*.

Yet, if the good sense and the piety of Papists would permit them to avail themselves of the means that are in their power, they are not altogether destitute of all means of redress. In few parts of the empire are they, in point of number, inconsiderable: in some they are the majority: and in Maryland they have all the respectability which good birth, reputable connexions, and good estates, can confer. They are not, moreover, (as we are,) distracted and enfeebled by sects and parties. All sound policy must protest against our provoking such a people to become our enemies; and Christianity is shocked by our driving them, by repeated wrongs, still farther from our communion.

The ill treatment which they every where receive from us, is every where disgraceful; but it more particularly ill becomes the people of this province, which was settled by Catholics. It was granted to a Papist avowedly, that Papists might here enjoy their religion unmolested. Differing from colonists in general, the first settlers in Maryland were, with very few exceptions, persons of family and fortune: and this



this too is the character of their descendants; who still possess some of the best lands and best fortunes in the province. Restrained from many of the means of shewing their regard for their country, they yet are, as far as it is in their power, as desirous and as ready to promote it's welfare as any other of it's inhabitants. I am sure they have reason to be so; for their all is at stake in it: and I know of nothing in their religion, that necessarily makes them hostile either to their own interests, or to those of the public. If they have not hitherto been, or are not now, so active as some other descriptions of men are in what are called patriotic exertions, they have not only the common apology of other quiet and orderly persons, that they conceive themselves in this case to be at liberty to follow their own private judgments; and that they do not think such self-commissioned exertions either necessary, wise, or just; but they may also alledge, that they are restrained by laws to which they submit from a sense of duty: that seeing the fair edifice of our glorious Constitution already in flames, they think that their intermeddling in the matter might be deemed to be the throwing another unnecessary faggot; and that they are piously unwilling to add to our present embarrassments and confusions. Not to admit of such apologies is to imitate the tyranny of the Egyptians in demanding bricks where no straw had been given, and to refuse to others the exercise of that liberty which we so clamorously demand for ourselves.

In the hard measure thus dealt out to this people, we first make the offence, and then punish it. To justify our rigour towards them, we pretend that, by their education, modes, and habits of thinking, they are disqualified from exercising certain offices of citizenship; from which, therefore, we exclude them. Now if they really be unfit, is it not to be ascribed to our ill policy and injustice, in driving them to foreign countries for education; from which it is natural they should return, if not with prejudices against their own country, yet with no predilection nor habits in it's favour? If they come back to us without any such prejudices; or if, when returned, they divest themselves of them, it is an instance of very extraordinary merit: still we are without excuse for unnecessarily exposing them to so imminent an hazard\*. By this instance of ill-timed jealousy we lose the best chance we can ever have of bringing them within our pale; because uniformity of opinion is generally best promoted by an intercommunity with persons of other communions. And who knows not that impressions of any kind are not only most easily made, but sink the deepest when made, in our early years? I take not into account the sums of money of which our country is thus annually drained, though they are considerable: but I do regret, and cannot but regret, the misdirection and misapplication of many fine talents;

\* "Edoceantur hic, qui hic nascuntur; statimque ab infantia natale solum amare et frequentare consuecant." — Plinii Epist. lib. iv. ep. 13.

the alienation of affections; the interruption of the kind offices of good neighbourhood; and, above all, the perpetuating of religious differences which are begun in the education of Catholics.

And now let me conclude in the apposite words of the apocryphal author of Ecclesiasticus: *Remembering our end, let enmity cease; remembering corruption and death, let us abide in the commandments; and remembering the commandments, let us bear no malice to our neighbour.* Let both Protestants and Papists at least unite and join in this; in praying to God our common Father, that, by *putting away all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamour, and evil-speaking, with all malice; and by being kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven us all; those who suffer wrong may at length be helped to right, and be rewarded for their patient suffering!* And let all Christians, of all communions, more especially pray for the good estate of the Catholic Church, that it may be so guided and governed by God's good spirit, that all who profess and call themselves Christians may be led into the way of truth, and hold the faith in unity of spirit, in the bond of peace, and in righteousness of life.



## DISCOURSE VII.

## ON FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES\*.

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PSALM xi. ver. 3.

*If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?*

ON what particular occasion, or at what precise period of time, this Psalm was written, commentators are not perfectly agreed. It cannot, like many other writings, be illustrated by a reference to contemporary authors : the chief information, therefore, that is now to be obtained respecting it, must be collected from it's own internal evidence. On all hands it is agreed, that it is, as it's title asserts, *a Psalm of David's*, written in the midst of some of those many difficulties in which it was his lot to be involved during a large portion of his life. Most probably it was composed during the rebellion of his son Absalom ; when,

\* Preached at Queen Anne's Parish, in Prince George's County, Maryland, in the year 1773.

to preserve his crown, he was forced to abandon his palace. To reclaim this refractory son, he had long tried persuasion to little purpose; nor were the harsher measures to which he now had recourse more effectual. He was as unsuccessful in war, as he had heretofore been in the gentler arts of conciliation. To persevere in so unnatural and hopeless a war, must have been dreadful; it could be exceeded in dreadfulness only by the still greater horror of abandoning his faithful adherents, and all good men, to the cruelty of rebels. It may, I think, very fairly be inferred, from several expressions in the Psalm now under consideration, that, in some such extremity, (when to proceed and to desist appeared to be equally hazardous,) there were among his counsellors some who were either weak or wicked, or both; and who, watching his (not unnatural) moments of irresolution and despondency, advised and pressed him at once to give up the contest. Once before, if not oftener, it had been the fate of David to have reason to lament his having through an amiable diffidence given up his own judgment in deference to others. When he was at Mizpeh in Moab, in the Cave of Adullam, and he and his adherents appeared to be in safety, the prophet Gad (from motives, it is probable, similar to those of the counsellors just alluded to in this Psalm) gave him the same advice: this advice he was then so unwary or so unfortunate as to follow, and fatally *departed from his bold*. Recollecting what he had before suffered by listening to insidious advisers, he

now more carefully considers and weighs the advice given him on this occasion. To desist from war is an advice to which every good man and good king will readily listen: yet, considering the characters of the the advisers, it's being tendered now was certainly suspicious, and might be deceitful; it was clearly dangerous, and might be ruinous. This eleventh Psalm seems to be a summary of his reflections when this advice was tendered; and a declaration of his resolution to reject it, together with some of his reasons for rejecting it.

It opens in that apparently abrupt manner so common in Oriental writers, in an address which, together with a pointed insinuation that they did not *trust in the Lord*, conveys a severe reprimand to his advisers for their applying to him who did *trust in the Lord*; advice better adapted to themselves, who probably did not. *In the Lord put I my trust; how say ye then to my soul, flee as a bird to your mountain?* The words evidently imply a strong disapprobation of the advice he had received. And if the conjectures here suggested respecting the occasion on which such advice is supposed to have been given be well founded, it certainly was not without reason that he disapproved of it. Yet the advice (to say the least of it) was specious; and the advisers, from their being at court and about the king's person, most probably respectable. It is not difficult to imagine how many plausible arguments such counsellors might find to urge against the king's engaging in so unpromising a contest.



test. With far too much reason they might alledge, that it was a war which held out neither to himself nor his people any of the fascinating allurements either of glory or of gain. If at last he succeeded, the best he had to hope for was only that he might be restored to his former situation : and all he could gain was merely that he might preserve that which without a war he must have lost. It might have been demonstrated also, that, considering the controversy merely as it regarded a matter of property, that which even he must have contended for, was of such a nature, and so circumstanced, that even success was sure to cost more than it could be worth.

It is not recorded that the shrewd, the subtle, and time-serving Shimei was not in the number of these counsellors : but, whether he was or no, it is evident that they were influenced by his selfish spirit. Like modern oppositionists in the best feature of their character, they seem to have thwarted David, not so much out of enmity to him, as because the doing so was thought the best way to promote some indirect purpose of their own. They wished to see him fall, not that his avowed enemies might triumph, but that themselves might rise. In every point of view his prospect was dark and discouraging ; and therefore, as their chief aim in the advice now suggested was to add to his discouragement, few things could have been thought of more likely to dispirit him than their throwing all the blame, of all that had happened, on himself. They hesitated not to tell him,

*Behold thou art taken in thy mischief! Because thou art a bloody man, the Lord has delivered thy kingdom into the hands of Absalom thy son.* As though it were not enough to be unfortunate, these men interpreted misfortunes into judgments; thus rendering an event, which in any case would have been calamitous, almost desperate and past remedy: but, with all their perverseness in thus persisting, with or without reason, to blame the afflicted monarch, it cannot be alledged against them that they ever thought of taking part with his undutiful son, and still less of vindicating the unnatural rebellion of that son.

Whatever their suggestions were, the reply of David was unanswerable: *In the Lord put I my trust.* The sentence, however brief, is pregnant with a strong meaning connected with his subsequent expressions: it is as if he had said, to my enemies I leave it to trust in their chariots and *their horses*: I will not trust in my bow; neither shall my sword save me: *in the Lord put I my trust*; and *none that trusteth in him shall be desolate.*

Unmoved by an answer as judicious as it was pious, these opposing counsellors persisted in their purpose of intimidating the distressed king, by exaggerated accounts of the prowess and adroitness in war of his adversaries. See them, say they, *bending their bows, and making ready their arrows in the string.* These topics of alarm, so assiduously enforced, could not but affect and embarrass the king; but they succeeded

in completely staggering his firmness only by the insinuation of the text, which might be the suggestion not of ill-disposed but of weak counsellors, whom yet he regarded as sincerely attached to him. *If the foundations, said they, be destroyed, what can the righteous do?*

Different interpreters have entertained different opinions respecting the precise import of the word here rendered *foundations*. Some have supposed it to mean a *place of refuge*, or *place of strength*; such as were ordinarily situated or *founded* on hills: and it is imagined, that, in a composition which relates chiefly to enemies and war, and in which the scene is laid in an hilly country, this is a very apposite sense. Others, by *foundations*, conceive that the laws of the land are meant, and the *fundamental principles of government* \*; because, as *foundations* (properly so called,) uphold and support a building, so do just principles and righteous laws maintain and keep human society in a settled and established dependence, one part upon another. On this idea the same royal Psalmist, complaining in another place of the dissoluteness of some popular principles which were prevalent in his time, emphatically adds, that thereby *the earth, and all the inhabitants thereof, were*

\* Agreeably to this idea a late translator has thus rendered the passage:

“When fundamental laws are subverted,

“What should the righteous do?”

Street's New and Literal Version of the Psalms,

*dissolved,*



*dissolved*, i. e. overturned \*. In the lxxxixth Psalm, ver. 14, he says, *Justice and judgment are the habitation of the throne of God*. The word here rendered *habitation* might perhaps more naturally have been translated, the basis, *the foundation*, or the establishment, as it is in Psalm lxxxii. ver. 5 ; where it is said, *All the foundations of the earth are out of course*. If, therefore, *justice and judgment* be the *foundation* or supporting principle even of the throne of God, it may surely be admitted that they are the only solid grounds on which all human authority must rest ; and of course the *destruction* of such *foundations* must mean and be the destroying of all order and security. I am persuaded this is the true sense and meaning of the text.

It is natural to suppose that insincere, faithless, and wicked counsellors will always wish to *destroy* such *foundations* ; because those foundations, if suffered to remain, and still to possess all the strength which naturally belongs to them, would else *destroy* them. Bad men, unwilling to regulate their misdirected passions by the restraints of reason, are equally unwilling to let the laws regulate them ; yet laws are the only means which human wisdom can devise to restrain disorderly men. It is not to be wondered at,

\* Psalm lxxv. ver. 3.—“ Ubi hoc fecero sentiet terra iram meam, et præ metu examinabuntur quotquot inhabitant in eâ, cujus ego *fundamenta jeci*, et *columnas stabilivi*, quare et concutere eam non difficile mihi erit.”——Clarius. Critici Sacri in loco, vol. iv. p. 435.

therefore,

therefore, if such men, considering laws as intended to be not only fetters to tie their hands, but as principles also to subjugate and confine their minds, are always eager *to cast their cords* from them, and to *tear their bonds asunder*. In allusion to this just idea of the true purpose of all laws, the magistrate, in Judges xviii. ver. 7, is in the original with great propriety styled *the heir of restraint* : but as laws can protect no people but those who have the wisdom and the virtue to protect the laws, it follows that the cause of the lawless can prosper only by overturning or *destroying* laws, which are the *foundations* of all government, if indeed they be not, properly speaking, government itself.

Without, however, prosecuting this enquiry any farther as it respects the history of David, permit me, from what has already been observed on it, to draw a general corollary, or conclusion, which may serve as a basis to this discourse. This conclusion is, that all governments, or all constitutions, have their peculiar *foundations*, or fundamental principles, which those who live under them are bound both by duty and interest to defend. The argument thus pointed will naturally lead me, to make such observations and reflections on the present state of things among ourselves, as may not I trust be thought unsuitable to this solemnity.

That practice is the result of principle, will, I suppose, be readily admitted as a proposition which in general is just and well-founded. How much soever

at

at random we may sometimes seem to act; there are few, even of our most extravagant actions, which, if they could be fairly analyzed, would not be found to be the effect of some certain train of thinking; or, in other words, of some preconcerted system or plan. Thus a person, who, by mimicking a natural infirmity in another, at length contracts the same habit, though without either intending or designing to do so, or without even being conscious of it, must not charge his infirmity to nature, but to design, study, and plan. Unconnected, unfounded, and inconclusive reasoning, does not prove that we reason without any plan: it proves only that our plan is a bad one, or else that we want skill to follow it. No doubt we are often bad reasoners, as we certainly are when we are bad men: but even when our conduct is most unreasonable, still it is formed on some plan; there is still some latent principle, or *foundation*, to which our most eccentric actions might be traced. And when we say of an abandoned man that he is *unprincipled*, we do not, I apprehend, mean all that the epithet may seem literally to import; but only that such a man is without good principles. We consider practice merely as the evidence of principle; and accordingly it is chiefly from men's principles that we form an estimate of their characters, for we naturally as well as justly conclude that where the principles are right the practice can never be very materially wrong. It is true that a man of good principles may not perhaps always act as he ought; but we are sure that



that he will neither deliberately do nor persevere in what is wrong : whereas practice not dictated by principle (if there be such a thing) must be merely a matter of chance ; highly criminal when it produces evil, and without merit even when it does good : for a right behaviour, considered as an effect, and merely as it appears in the outward act, is an uncertain and fluctuating thing : if it be not founded on principle, evil may become good ; and the assassin, who, intending to stab a man whom he hated, missing his aim, opened an imposthume in the side of his enemy, and thereby saved his life, must be allowed to have performed a virtuous action.

If such be the importance of right principles, the degeneracy of modern times is manifest ; for, [with a total unconcern about principles, we rely solely on men's supposed interests and inclination, and conceive that they alone will lead to a right conduct.] But *what confidence is this wherein such men trust ? They say, (but surely they are but vain words,) that herein is counsel and strength. Now, behold, instead of beams of cedar, and rafters of fir, they lean on a broken reed on which if, in cases of extremity, we lean, it will go into our hands and pierce them. It was not so in the beginning. To secure our orthodoxy, creeds and confessions of faith were compiled ; and to instil into us right principles of moral conduct, schools and seminaries of learning were founded. The founders of our happy Constitution laid it's foundations in suitable provisions for men's being trained to think, as*  
well

well as to act, aright. To have expected the fruits of obedience from those whose infant minds they had suffered to be imbued with the principles of disobedience, would (as no doubt they argued) have literally been to have expected to *gather where they had not sowed*.

In the unbounded freedom of modern times we despise such precaution; and, (as it is the misfortune of the best things to be most liable to abuse,) in our exceeding anxiety not to instil prejudices, nor to infringe the rights of private judgment, our legislators seem at length to have learned to be quite at ease respecting principles of conduct. Instead of being at any pains (as our ancestors were) to prevent guilt and misery in the people, we wait till crimes are committed, and then punish them: and so, instead of people's being led to a right conduct by the gentle, natural, and effectual means of a prescribed course of education, they are pursued with penalties for having been, through the neglect of their governors, driven into misconduct. This does not differ much from the policy of a man who should try, by means of mounds and dams, to force a stream into some particular direction, without first opening a channel into which it would naturally and easily run.

The reproach of our age is not so much a corruption of manners, as a corruption of principles. Owing to various causes, which it is foreign to the subject in hand now to investigate, we are not yet so profligate a people as (if the expression may be pardoned) con-



sistency requires that we should be. By a fortunate perverseness, we are at variance with ourselves: adequate causes have not yet produced all their effects; polluted fountains do not send out streams as turbid as themselves. But the order of Nature is not changed: as men sow, in due time they shall certainly reap. There is a strong and unalterable connexion between men's principles and their actions; and in spite of accident, or any extrinsic causes, the characters of mankind will ultimately be what education or principles early instilled shall make them.

This extreme relaxation of principle, which, though but little thought of, is perhaps hardly less dangerous than even a greater profligacy in some former periods of our history; because that, from the notoriety of its danger, was marked, and sometimes shunned; whilst this, by being caressed and taken into our bosoms, was not found out to be our foe, till, like the serpent in the fable, it had stung us to death; can hardly have grown up to this height by accident.

If a judgment may be formed from its present flourishing state, it must have been cultivated with no common care: and though to undo and to unsettle, to set men loose from restraints, and to teach them to acquiesce and submit only when opposition and resistance are impracticable, may be thought articles of instruction which it must be difficult to inculcate, we find, by their effects, that they certainly have been inculcated with great success. So far back as the reign of the first Charles, dissatisfactions with the



established government, and a passion for revolutions and reforms, were pursued as a system; and at the Revolution they were so confirmed as to have been almost established into the national faith and practice. Ever since, they have been disseminated throughout the empire with a degree of success proportioned to the increased facility of the means: no popular orator, nor popular writer, has of late years ever omitted an opportunity of pointing out the flaws and defects of the established system; and, in consequence, recommending some reformation. That the firm basis or corner-stone of all good government is that principle which (instructed by our older writers) I call a principle of obedience for conscience sake cannot well be denied: even modern theoretical writers acknowledge it in owning that no government does or can possess force or power sufficient for its own support, were it not for the general opinion and persuasion, if not of its sacredness, yet of its inviolability. But the most obvious and direct tendency of the prevailing system of public men, in thus finding fault with almost every thing that is established, and involving the executive power in difficulties, in order to take advantage of them, to oppose and resist it, is the inculcating a general persuasion that government is neither sacred nor inviolable. It is this state of the public mind which, in this discourse, I designate (and I hope not improperly) by the terms of a relaxation of principle; or, in the language of my text, a destruction of foundations.

Happy in the easier task of having left to our care the maintenance only of those excellent *foundations* which were laid for us by our progenitors, we are without excuse, if, either through heedlessness or through design, we suffer them to be *destroyed*. Those great and good men, who, *like wise master-builders*, have from time to time so *fitly framed together* our glorious Constitution, well knew that *other sure foundation no man could lay* than that already laid by *prophets and apostles*, namely obedience, not only *for wrath*, but *for conscience sake*. Founded on this rock a superstructure of greatness and happiness has been raised, to which even suspicion could apprehend no danger, were it not of the nature of human grandeur to totter and sink under its own weight. Free governments are most endangered by false principles; just as persons brought up in healthy climates are most apt to contract diseases in unwholesome ones. *Except, therefore, the Lord keep, as well as build, the house, it is but lost labour* for us to think of having it propped up, not (in the language of the Apostle) *with gold, silver, and precious stones*, but with the feeble buttresses of *wood, and hay, and stubble* \*. It was founded in wisdom and in virtue; and on that foundation, if at all, it must be maintained and preserved. *Righteousness alone* (which is the *foundation* or fundamental principle which it is the aim of this discourse to recommend) *exalteth a nation*; whereas sin, or false

\* 1 Cor. iii. ver. 12.



principles, are not only *the reproach*, but the *destruction of any people*. It is acknowledged, indeed, that, as in private life, *the way of the wicked sometimes prospereth*, and *those are permitted to be happy who deal very treacherously*; so virtuous States are sometimes, for a while, *oppressed and brought low*, whilst corrupt ones are *advanced to great power*. But, in general, the hand of God seldom continues to be long against a *righteous people*; nor does vengeance, though slow, ever fail, at last, to overtake either guilty individuals or guilty communities. States, as States, have no prescribed period of existence; yet they also may have *a time to die*: and to expect them to arrive at perpetuity without virtuous principles and manners in the people of whom they are composed, seems to be as vain as in the life of man it would be to hope for longevity without any regimen or without temperance.

I am not conscious that I am of a temper to rail indiscriminately against my own times. In many respects they merit much commendation; perhaps beyond all that have preceded them. Through a deference to public opinion, which abhors every thing that is monstrous in manners; through the influence of fashion and habit, our character as a people is not marked by any prevailing propensity to commit great and flagrant crimes: but, I own, I hardly know how far such negative kind of merit is entitled to praise; at most, it seems to be but the virtues of that particular class of bees which in autumn are called drones,

and



and which are innoxious only because they are impotent. However commendable it is in the character of a people that they are not marked by any great and flagrant vices, we are entitled to this commendation, if at all, by accident rather than by design, that is to say, because, fortunately for us, it is not fashionable to be eminently vicious; whilst our equal deficiency in any great virtues is in no slight degree studied and deliberate. [There never was a time when a whole people were so little governed by settled good principles.] Nor is this unconcern about good principles confined to matters which relate to government. By a natural gradation in error, it pervades the whole compass of our conduct. Wise and observing persons see with sorrow that it has gained a footing in, and materially injured, every department of society. Parents complain, and not without reason, that children are no longer so respectful and dutiful as they ought to be, and as they used to be; whilst children might, with not less reason, object to their parents still more culpable instances of a failure of duty. Both employers and the employed, much to their mutual shame and inconvenience, no longer live together with any thing like attachment and cordiality on either side: and the labouring classes, instead of regarding the rich as their guardians, patrons, and benefactors, now look on them as so many over-grown colossuses whom it is no demerit in them to wrong. A still more general (and it is to be feared not less just) topic of complaint is, that the lower classes, instead of

being industrious, frugal, and orderly, (virtues so peculiarly becoming their station in life,) are become idle, improvident, and dissolute. And, however much it is to be regretted by all ranks, it does not admit of a doubt that this dissoluteness in the inferior members of the community may be traced to some corresponding profligacy in the higher orders. The manners of a community may be regarded as one great chain, of which persons in superior spheres are but the upper links. The same causes which, in the upper walks of life, lead men of active minds to engage in seditious and factious conspiracies and rebellions, lead those in lower spheres (when not attached as satellites to powerful revolvers) to become either drunkards, and unmannerly, and abusive; or else, smugglers, gamblers, and cheats.

But these deviations from rectitude, though by no means inconsiderable in themselves, yet, when comprehensively considered, are but small parts of a great whole. It is in our character, as subjects, that our loss of good principles, and consequent errors in practice, are most manifest and most mischievous. The doctrine of *obedience for conscience sake*\* is (as has just been

\* As the only remedy against ruinous confusions in a State, Aristotle, the great teacher of political wisdom to the Heathen world, recommends the laying the foundation of civil government in religion: *πρωτον η περι Θεων επιμελεια*. Aristot. Polit. lib. i. The recommendation very clearly shews from what source he derived all that he knew on these subjects.

been observed) the great *corner-stone* of all good government ; which, whenever any *builder* of constitutions shall be so unwise as to *refuse*, or, not refusing, shall afterwards suffer to be *destroyed*, what can he expect but that the whole fabric should be overturned ; and that *on whomsoever it may fall it will grind them to powder* ? The importance of this principle of obedience cannot well be stated in stronger terms, than it is in an answer of a great man recorded by Plutarch. When the Thebans praised the government of Epaminondas, and gratefully acknowledged that they were happy because he governed so well, that truly great man replied : “ Not so ; you, our country, and

Plutarch, also, compares a government without religion to castles built in the air : Αλλα πολις αν μοι δοκει μαλλον εδαφους χωρις, η πολιτια των περι Θεων δοξης αναιρεθεις, πανταπασι συσασιν λαβειν, η λαβυσσας τηρσαι. — Plut. adv. Colotem. Opera, vol. iii. folio edit. p. 1125.

We who, blessed be God ! on the subject of religion, have a *more sure word of prophecy*, have also, on government, a *surer foundation*. In Christian States religion and government rest on the same basis ; success in the latter being the necessary and constant result of sincerity in the former. The Church and the King do, and must, stand or fall together : to pretend to approve of the one, whilst yet we oppose the other, is to approve of St. Peter when he drew the sword, but to disapprove of him when he enjoins submission. It is the peculiar boast of the Church of England, that, amidst all the *changes and chances* of our history, she never, either in her doctrine or her practice, has countenanced any principles tending to sedition, faction, or treason. Churchmen, as such, have often been sufferers for, but never the opposers of, lawful authority. This is so well known a fact, that, amidst all the contumelies with which her enemies have so often loaded her, the resistance of just authority has never been objected to her.



“we all are happy, not merely because I govern well,  
“but because you obey well.”

Yet who is there among us so unobserving as not to know how much it is the fashion with the unhallowed politicians of these unprincipled times to malign and scoff at this venerable doctrine? Or, who so ill-informed of the importance of this principle as not to lament the success they have had in bringing it, at length, into very general disrepute? I sincerely believe that the low estimation in which this fundamental principle is held is the great evil of our age. There is, however, this consolation left to those who still reverence it as the life and soul of all good government, that, however vilified it may be, it never can be wholly abandoned and lost, till God, in resentment of our sins, shall suffer the National Church to be *destroyed*, and, along with it, our present glorious Constitution. Men may debate as much and as long as ill-judged policy and ill-regulated passions shall prompt them; new theories may be invented, or old projects under new names be revived and pursued; and what is received as wisdom and truth in one age, and one country, may, in others, be scorned as folly, or reprobated as error: but the word of God *abideth fast forever*; and is no more affected by the agitation of human opinions, than a rock in the ocean can be moved or shaken by the winds and the waves that beat against it\*.

\* “Ille, velut pelagi rupes immota, resistit :

“Quæ sese, multis circumlatrantibus undis,

“Mole tenet : scopuli nequicquam & spumea circum

“Saxa fremunt——”

Æneid. vii. l. 586.

This great doctrine of the liturgy and of the homilies of our Church, as well as of the laws of the Land, we are now, alas, intemperately hastening with the most deplorable ignorance to *destroy* ! and at the same time encouraging a novel experiment in the world ; an experiment by which it is proposed to keep society together, or, in other words, to build up a Constitution without any *foundations*. So much perhaps has not in direct terms yet been avowed ; but all this, and even more than this, must inevitably result from that loose notion respecting government, which has long been disseminated among the people at large with incredible industry, namely, that all government is the mere creature of the people, and may therefore be tampered with, altered, new-modelled, set up or pulled down, just as tumultuous crowds of the most disorderly persons in the community (who on such occasions are always so forward to call themselves *the people*) may happen in some giddy moments of overheated ardour to determine.

By something like a fatality, these notions, so well calculated for the lowest and most ignorant of the people, do not appear now to have originated with them. To promote some sinister ends, some leading persons (who, not being of that class of which mobs are most generally formed, should therefore have been above the cherishing of any mobbish maxims) revived and propagated the stale idea, (which it is probable they do not themselves believe,) that government is a combination among a few to oppress the many.



many. With having first broached this popular but dangerous slander, modern reformers however are not chargeable. This, as well as the principle of equality, is very faithfully copied from a similar instance of it's adoption in an early period of the history of the Jews. *Now Korah the son of Izhar, the son of Kohath, the son of Levi; and Dathan, and Abiram, the sons of Eliab; and On the son of Peleth, sons of Reuben, took men. And they rose up before Moses, with certain of the children of Israel, two hundred and fifty princes of the assembly, famous in the congregation, men of renown. And they gathered themselves together against Moses and against Aaron, and said unto them, Ye take too much upon you, seeing all the congregation are holy, every one of them, and the Lord is among them: wherefore then lift you up yourselves above the congregation of the Lord?* Num. xvi. ver. 1, 2, 3. But wherever, or whenever, the position was first produced, it is so palpably absurd, and has so often been shewn to be absurd, that nothing could have given it any currency but the artifice of confounding government itself, or government in the abstract, with the ministers of government. In a certain sense, and to a certain degree, government no doubt is the act of the executive power by it's ministers; and therefore, to oppose, thwart, and embarrass the ministers of government, is to thwart and oppose government itself; and most generally, though not always, so far from being meritorious, that it is quite the contrary. Still the ministers of government, and government

itself,



itself, however nearly connected, are distinct : [ministers may be unwise and unjust, and, as such, may not deserve support ; but the constitution of government, as long as it exists, is to be regarded as infallible and irresistible.] Under this idea, that government even in it's best estate is an evil, and that it's ministers must of course be corrupt, many conceive it to be meritorious to oppose both the one and the other : for, however possible it may seem to be in theory to oppose the ministers of government, and at the same time to support government, the history both of the mother country and her colonies shews, that, in practice, it is always difficult, if not impossible. To systematical and indiscriminate opposition it certainly is impossible. It is not perhaps that any considerable number of people seriously think, as it is here stated they do ; but they certainly act as if they thought there was great merit in opposition, even when, in opposing ministers, government itself is also opposed. The principle, however, (if indeed it is to be regarded as a principle,) is as indefensible as when it is carried into practice, it's effects are lamentable. In hardly any sense of the word is it true that government is an evil : but in this unqualified sense I cannot allow it to be an evil ; that is to say, what casuists call *malum in se* ; even admitting it to have originated from the wickedness of mankind. With equal reason might we vote the medicine to be an evil which cures us of a dangerous disease ; or the surgeon our enemy, who saves our lives by amputating a putrid limb. If, in some instances,

fiarces, through abuse, government does actually become (as no doubt it often does) an evil; this, properly understood, is no more to be objected to good government, than the fierce debates, the bitter quarrels, and the dreadful wars which have sprung from religion, are fairly to be charged to religion. Still, however, it remains a question, (and such a one as I think is incapable of being proved in the affirmative,) how far an indiscriminate opposition to the ministers of government, is the best way to correct even abuses in government: yet, as though there were no doubt in the case, both in the mother country and in the colonies, that species of parliamentary interference uniformly exerted by a self-created body of men, who are generally known and described under the settled title of the Opposition, is now supposed to be absolutely necessary to the preservation of liberty. It is extraordinary that a position of such moment has nowhere (as far as I know) ever been fairly argued; though I cannot help strongly suspecting, that if ever the point be carefully discussed, it will be found that, however generally entertained and acted on, it is ill-founded. If I am not mistaken, it has thus been received as a ruling principle in politics only since the Revolution; since which time, men of all descriptions, and of all parties, it is probable, have occasionally ranked under the banners of Opposition. And it is no mean proof of the system's being radically false and wrong, that the same men have uniformly maintained opinions and principles diametrically opposite to each other,

other, when in opposition, and when in place. Sir Robert Walpole stands recorded as the most violent patriot of his day, as well as the most corrupt minister: and such is the indulgence shewn by the public to this glaring inconsistency, that men are rewarded for their opposition by appointments to situations, in which it is well known they must and will defend the very measures they had before condemned. The necessity or the advantage of a systematical opposition, therefore, can, with any shew of consistency, be maintained by those persons alone, who think the interests of those who govern, adverse to those of the governed: whereas the fact is, that in no instance can the people who are governed be so much injured by a weak or wicked administration, as the constitution itself is injured. Mal-administration, corruption, and tyranny, in those who govern, sap the foundations of all good government, if with less shew, yet with hardly less reality, than they are sapped by sedition and rebellion in those who are governed. That it is of great moment carefully to watch the conduct of all administrations, is readily admitted; but it is of equal moment to attend with equal care to every thing else which relates to legislation and government. Such vigilance, however, is the particular and exclusive duty of no individual member or members of the community, whether in a public or private capacity: it is the common duty of every man in his sphere, and the especial duty of our constitutional guardians, whom we elect for that purpose, though not for that only. This duty they



equally discharge, when, in cases where the executive power requires and is entitled to support, they give it support ; as when, on a contrary supposition, they oppose and endeavour to counteract measures of which they cannot conscientiously approve. But this neither supposes nor justifies a distinct and united body of systematic opponents, nor indiscriminate opposition : yet, both in the British Parliament, and in our Colonial Assemblies, ever since the system began, there has never wanted a regular corps of members in opposition ; as well known, and as clearly designated as any of the officers of State. This body of men has far too often opposed, not only particular measures, (as every individual member is supposed to do when schemes are patronized either by those entrusted with the administration or others, which such members conceive to be unwise or unjust,) but in general all measures whatever which are supported by the executive power, or by a minister : and what is most alarming is, that, in thus thwarting and opposing the immediate supporters of government, many instances might be mentioned, in which the Members in Opposition, as they are regularly denominated, have, indirectly at least, taken part with, encouraged, and assisted the avowed enemies of their country : one also of it's more certain and constant effects is, that, in common with it's ministers, government in the abstract is vilified and traduced.

That some good has occasionally been effected by oppositions (which now seem to be as regular appendages

dages to our legislatures, as if they actually were a constitutional and essential part of them) I am far from denying ; but I much fear the good that is thus done bears no proportion to the evil : the former at best is uncertain, but not so the latter. As, however, it is no part of my purpose to go into a full discussion of this important question, suffice it for the present to observe, (what perfectly corresponds with the aim of this discourse,) that one of it's certain effects is, (as has just been observed,) it's giving rise to a low and unworthy opinion of government. Hence men of ill-informed or misdirected minds are naturally led, instead of reverencing government, to do all they can to dishonour it. It was this general habit of *speaking evil of dignities, and despising dominion*, which in the last century, more than any thing else, engendered and fostered infinite *confusion and every evil work* in the State ; and at length produced those *secret conspiracies and open attempts* against the laws, the liberties, and the religion of the land ; such as now once more fill the minds of all observing and thinking men with apprehension and awe.

This low opinion of government naturally produces another false and dangerous estimate of things : in proportion as government is degraded, those who depress it exalt themselves. Hence, to be the friend of government, subjects a man to the mortifying suspicion of being of an abject and servile mind ; whilst popularity is sure to attach to those who oppose government, or rather perhaps the ministers of government.

ment. And hence too, as flimsy oratory is always most in vogue when sound principles and sound learning are least so, our forest committees, aping the members of our conventions and congresses in their volubility of speech, as well as in their patriotism, harangue not less vehemently on those unvarying topics, the abuses of government, the vileness of those whom they call the tools of government, the disinterestedness of opposition, and the genuine love of liberty which actuates those who conduct opposition. These seem always to have been the favourite topics of that "swollen and turgid elocution \*," which a Roman writer, distinguished for his elegance, mentions as characteristical of his countrymen in the decline of their empire †.

This is not all : as though there were some irresistible charm in all extemporaneous speaking, however rude, the orators of our committees and sub-committees, like those in higher spheres, *prevail with their*

\* "Ventosa isthæc et enormis loquacitas."—Petronius Arbiter.

† "Est magna et notabilis eloquentia alumna licentiæ, quam stulti libertatem vocabant; comes seditionum; effrænati populi incitamentum; contumax; temeraria; arrogans; quæ in bene constitutis civitatibus non oritur."—Tacit. Dialog. de Orator.

"The meek spirit of obedience had given way to a turbulent impatience of legal restraint, and to an overweening conceit of self-consequence. Every pert demagogue thought himself at liberty to disturb the decorum of popular assemblies by his seditious declamations: as if effrontery of face and volubility of tongue were the only necessary accomplishments of an orator and statesman."—Bever's Roman Polity, book ii. p. 85.

tongues.



*linguas* \*. [To public speakers alone is the government of our country now completely committed; it is cantoned out into new districts, and subjected to the jurisdiction of these committees; who, not only without any known law, but directly in the teeth of all law whatever, issue citations, sit in judgment, and inflict pains and penalties on all whom they are pleased to consider as delinquents: not only new crimes have been thus created, but also new punishments; in comparison with which even the interdiction from fire and water among the Romans was mild and merciful. An empire is thus completely established within an empire; and a new system of government of great power erected, even before the old one is formally abolished.

Now, could all this have happened had there not first been a great change in the public mind, and a total direliction of all those fundamental maxims and principles by which the public has hitherto been happily influenced and governed? If such a state of things does not prove a total *destruction of foundations* already to have taken place, it shews far too clearly that so awful an event cannot be very distant.

I fear I might be thought to sport with your understandings, as well as with your humanity, if, notwithstanding all the testimonies of history, and notwithstanding all the fair deductions of argument, I were still to amuse you with hopes that what is yet to come

\* Psal. xii. ver. 4.

will be better than what is past, or is now passing. It is true I do not pretend to bring any direct or positive proof, that it either is, or ever was, in the contemplation of any individuals among us, or even of any party, to kindle up a civil war, either in our Province, or on the Continent, for the purpose of *destroying foundations*, and erecting on their ruins that better constitution which we are told is so much wanted. He who in such a case waits for proofs, resembles the man who, seeing that his house is on fire, should resolve not to send for an engine till he saw the flames bursting out at the roof.

I feel I want spirits to draw a picture of those miserable confusions which we may too surely look for, if for our sins the Almighty should see fit to suffer these unhallowed principles to produce all their natural effects. Good men are particularly interested in praying to be spared from such times of calamity. *If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?* No question is made respecting the unrighteous: the royal Psalmist could be at no loss to judge what they would do; for he had been taught by experience, that a time of general disorder is to bad men what a shipwreck is to barbarians. Like the willow, men of loose principles bend and yield to the stream; whilst *the righteous*, in a deluge of iniquity, imitating the oak, are usually torn up by the roots and swept away by the torrent.

It can neither be concealed nor denied that the times are critical and awful. *The foundations of the world*

*world are out of course : the judgments of God are in the earth :* much therefore doth it become the *inhabitants thereof to learn righteousness.* In vain do even we, who profess to see and to own that our present confusions are not to be ascribed to any particular cause or causes which have operated just at this particular juncture, but rather to a series of accumulated causes which seem at length to have arrived at their crisis ; in vain, I say, do we affect to lament bad principles, whilst we take so little pains to promote good ones : in vain do we profess with our lips to love our country and it's constitution, whilst, by our lives, we disgrace the one and *destroy* the other. It is only by sound principles and a corresponding practice ; by a deep and due sense of the duties of religion, evidenced by a suitable purity of manners ; it is, in short, only by *believing all the articles of the Christian faith*, manifested by *keeping God's holy will and commandments*, that the peace of our Jerusalem can be restored : and God forbid that on this solemn occasion we should ask pardon for sins which we do not intend to forsake, or fast for offences in which we resolve to persist !

But, *that it may be well with us and our children for ever*, let us now at length, in good earnest, unite our hands, our hearts, and our prayers, against those enemies (be they who they may) who meditate war, not only against the Parent State, but against every thing that is established, venerable and good, whether in that country or in this : and more especially let us set



ourselves against those still worse enemies, our own sins. Thus, and thus only, may all things, by the blessing of God, yet *be ordered and settled on the best and surest foundations ; and truth and justice, peace and happiness, religion and piety, may yet be established among us, for all generations !*

## DISCOURSE VIII.

ON THE STRIFE BETWEEN ABRAM AND LOT \*.

GENESIS, ch. xiii. ver. 7, 8.

*And there was a strife between the herdsmen of Abram's cattle, and the herdsmen of Lot's cattle : and the Canaanite and the Perizzite dwelled then in the land. And Abram said unto Lot, Let there be no strife between thee and me, I pray thee ! and between thy herdsmen and my herdsmen ; for we be brethren.*

IT gives me great pleasure, my brethren, to see so many of you assembled together on this occasion ; not perhaps so much because it is *on this occasion*, as because I am happy in every opportunity that occurs of ministering to your edification. The occasion of our present meeting is, no doubt, an extraordinary one ; and I am not to wonder, that it has brought

\* Preached in Queen Anne's Parish, Prince George's County, Maryland, in the year 1774.

more of you to this place than we commonly see here. Whatever may be my private opinion of a day of fasting, enjoined, not recommended, by persons of whose authority over us it has been our happiness till now to be ignorant, I consider that fasting and prayer are always proper at proper seasons; that times of danger are of course times of humiliation: and therefore, I have not only thought it right for myself to comply with this requisition, but I advised you also to comply with it; and your having done so entitles you to my thanks.

That the sermon I am about to deliver to you will be such an one as those who appointed this solemnity expect from the Clergy in general, is more than I dare hope. I can only take care, as I will do, that it shall be such an one as I think our circumstances require; and which, whilst it gives no just cause of dissatisfaction to any one, may suggest some useful and acceptable instruction to all.

The book of Genesis deserves to be very generally read, if it were only for the many specimens of fine writing with which it abounds. A celebrated Greek critic \* has noticed with just praise one such passage in

\* Ταύτη καὶ ὁ τῶν Ἰσραὴλιν θεσμοθετῆς, ἐχ' ὁ τυχῶν αἰῆς, ἐπειδὴ τὴν τοῦ Θεοῦ δύναμιν κατὰ τὴν ἀξίαν ἐχωρῆσεν, κάξῃφηνεν, ἐθεύς ἐν τῇ ἐισβολῇ γραφαί, των νομων, Εἶπεν ὁ Θεός, φησὶ τί; γένεθω φῶς, καὶ ἐγένετο· γενεθω γῆ, καὶ ἐγένετο.—Longinus. Toupii Editio. p. 34.

“ So likewise the Jewish legislator, no ordinary person, having  
“ conceived a just idea of the power of God, has nobly expressed  
“ it



in the beginning of the book : and had he gone on to the history of Joseph, or to the story of the text, there can be no doubt but that he would have acknowledged that they possess the two characteristics of composition which are supposed of all others to be the most difficult to attain and unite ; I mean dignity and simplicity. The Scriptures indeed are replete with instances of that sententious and pregnant brevity which critics have extolled in profane writers. Of this kind are the following passages : *And he arose and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, Peace ! be still ! and the wind ceased, and there was a great calm. Then cried they all again, saying, Not this man, but Barabbas ! now Barabbas was a robber.* Many other similar passages might be recollected\* : but, for the present, it will be sufficient to instance that of the text : *Let there, I pray thee, be no strife between thee and me, and between thy herdsmen and my herdsmen ! for we be brethren.*

The account given in this book of the patriarchal times is uncommonly interesting ; both as it is the only authentic one of the first ages of the world ; and as it exhibits a faithful view, not only of events of great moment in the history of mankind, but of aboriginal

“ it in the beginning of his law. And God said—What ? Let  
 “ there be light, and there was light ; let the earth be, and the  
 “ earth was.”——Smith’s Translation, sect. ix. p. 41.

\* For, he spake, and it was done ; he commanded, and it stood fast.  
 Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean ! I will, be thou clean.

men and primeval manners, undebased by fable. It contains the history of a people, who, in some interesting particulars, are without a parallel in the world. This singularity consisted not merely in their origin, of which we have fuller and more faithful accounts than we have of any other people; but in this, that whilst most of the other nations of the earth have, in some period of their history, degenerated into the savage state, this never has been the case with the Jews. Of no other people can it be said that they have always been a distinct people, and always civilized. The general history of the human race is, that at the creation and originally they were civilized, and have become savage only through corruption. Now, to have resisted or escaped such corruption from a period more remote than any other people can carry back their history, exhibits, if not human nature, at least the social state of man, in a new point of view\*. In some respects, no doubt, like the rest of the human race, this wonderful people have conformed to, and been influenced by, time, place, and climate: but it has also been peculiar to them never to have been left wholly to their own guidance and direction. They were subjected to a superior controul, and at the same time enjoyed a perfect free-agency; two points of deep moment, the truth of

\* See this important point in the history of man very ingeniously and clearly made out in "Two Letters on the Savage State, addressed to Lord Kaimes," by Dr. Doig of Stirling.—Printed for Robinsons in Paternoster-row, 1792.

which it is much easier to prove than it is to define and comprehend. In all the ordinary affairs of life they appear to have been governed by those maxims by which mankind in general are governed; but in whatever related to government and religion they were under the particular directions of the Almighty. In what manner, however, or to what extent this divine influence was exerted, no human powers can pretend to ascertain. All these circumstances render the brief accounts left us of them highly deserving of attention. Accounts of a people in the infancy of society are always interesting: but, in addition to the common incidents occurring in the history of a common people, that of the Patriarchs has in it those extraordinary circumstances just mentioned; and therefore differs materially even from that of their own posterity, when their civil government, though still a theocracy, came to bear a nearer resemblance to the institutions of other countries. Indeed, their government never ceased to differ from all other governments till it ceased to exist: it was always eminently patriarchal. The head or supreme of the state was, emphatically, God; and to that circumstance it owes its title: but, under him, at least in their earlier periods, each family and each individual were trained, in whatever related to the general weal, to look for no other law than the will of the father of the family; and his will was regarded as the will of God. Their manners were simple: in general they were shepherds, the cultivation of the soil becoming a more general



employment among them only in a more improved state of society. For a long time there appears to have been no division of landed property : the whole world was one general common : and the owners of flocks and herds being at liberty to choose the best pastures wherever they could find them, staid no longer in a place than that place could maintain them. Permanency of landed property took place only when pastures for cattle were changed for vallies standing thick with corn : and when a part became invested in any individual, or numbers of individuals, it became so only on the principle of prior occupancy.

It was in this state of society, that is to say during their pastoral life, that the incident mentioned in the text took place. It may perhaps seem extraordinary that, amidst many occurrences possibly not less important to Abraham, and more interesting to posterity, which must have happened, but which the sacred historian has omitted to record, he should have been so careful to preserve this little family quarrel. But, if it be little or insignificant in itself, it was not so in it's consequences : the mentioning it, therefore, is a proof not only of the exactness and fidelity of Moses, but of his skill and judgment as an historian. His subject was the history of God's chosen people : and if in the prosecution of his work it was necessary (as no doubt it was) to speak of the separation which took place between the families of Abram and Lot, it was also necessary to assign the reason of it : that reason

was

was this *strife* or quarrel between their respective herdsmen.

There is another point of view in which the insertion of this story appears to be of moment. The leading object and aim of the Scriptures of the Old Testament was to keep alive the expectation of the restoration of mankind by the Messiah. Now, this *strife* led to a separation of the two kinsmen; and that separation led Lot into a quarrel and a war with the petty kings on the plains of Sodom. In this war, notwithstanding their separation, Abram, entirely for the sake of Lot, took a part. Had he not done this, or had not the historian recorded it, we should have known nothing of Melchisedech, whom the Apostles so remarkably holds out to us as a type, if not an exhibition or real personification, of the Messiah.

Of little moment, moreover, as we may now think the subject of *strife*, it was not so in the estimation of those between whom it happened. The contentions of these patriarchal chiefs may be supposed to have been, who should first choose and enjoy the most shady tree, under which they might retreat to shun the rays of a meridian sun; or at what well each should water their respective herds. Compared with the more extensive and more complex interests usually involved in the quarrels of modern rulers, I grant they appear to be petty and insignificant. But the principle which set them at variance was probably the same with that which is still at the bottom of most quarrels; I mean pride: for, *by pride only cometh contention.*

*contention.* Pride and ambition are plants which will grow in any soil and in any situation : they thrive in sunshine, and do not die in the shade.

The history of mankind consists, alas ! of little else than a recital of quarrels. All those great events which so adorn the historic page are composed of such *violence and strife, and wars and fightings*, as might better comport with the characters of wild beasts, than of rational creatures \*. Some have gone farther, and alledged that a state of nature is a state of war ; that man † is naturally hostile to man ; and that, though naturally social and gregarious, yet (as if fiercer than either wolves or bears, which rarely attack each other) mankind seldom meet in large bodies but for the purpose of destroying one another. If this be a fair, it certainly is not a flattering, picture of human nature : and every man in this case may with too much propriety exclaim, in the words of the Prophet, *Woe is me, my mother, that thou hast born me a man of strife, and a man of contention to the whole earth !*

Abram loved and practised peace ; yet even Abram could not always avoid contention. The *strife* spoken of in the text was soon succeeded by another do-

\* “ To speak impartially, both sayings are very true, that man to man is a kind of god, and that man to man is an arrant wolf.”  
—Hobbes’s Dedication to the Earl of Devonshire.

† “ Voluntas lædendi omnibus quidem inest in statu naturæ.”  
—Hobbes de Cive.



mestic dispute ; when the unseasonable joy of Sarah urged him to cast out the bond-woman Hagar and her son Ishmael. A similar fate seems to have pursued his son Isaac. When, through the unreasonable jealousy of Abimelech and the Philistines, he was driven from Gerar, and had pitched his tent in the valley of Gerar, even there *the herdsmen* strove with his herdsmen for some wells of water which his own servants had digged\*. Esau and Jacob (as ominous of their future fortunes) *struggled*, we are told, in the womb of their mother. And how truly Esau was *born a man of strife*, appears from the prophecy of his father that he *should live by the sword*. This prophecy was abundantly fulfilled in the history of his posterity.

\* It is not at all extraordinary that we find so many instances in sacred history of disputes concerning water. In tracing the institutions of society respecting the right of property, Blackstone justly remarks, that when a people quitted hunting, from the uncertainty of that method of provision, and gathered together flocks and herds of a tame and sequacious nature, "the support of these their cattle made the article of *water* a very important point. And therefore the book of Genesis (the most venerable monument of antiquity, considered merely with a view to history) will furnish us with frequent instances of violent contentions concerning wells; the exclusive property of which appears to have been established in the first digger, or occupant, even in places where the ground and herbage remained yet in common. Thus we find Abraham, who was but a sojourner, asserting his right to a well in the country of Abimelech, and exacting an oath for his security, because 'he had digged that well.' And Isaac, about ninety years afterwards, reclaimed this his father's property; and after much contention with the Philistines, was suffered to enjoy it in peace."

——Blackst. Comm. vol. ii. p. 5.

Josephus thus describes them : “ They were a very  
 “ turbulent and disorderly people ; always addicted to  
 “ commotions, and rejoicing in changes ; beginning  
 “ war on the least adulation of those who besought  
 “ them, and hastening to battles as it were to a feast.”  
 As for Jacob, deep indeed were the draughts which he  
 drank of these *waters of strife*. His whole life was  
 embittered by alienations of friends, family feuds, and  
 the disobedience of children.

Even the mild spirit of Christianity has not been  
 able to subdue this rooted propensity of our natures  
 to *wars and fightings*. The world goes on as it begun.  
*Egyptians are still set against Egyptians : we still fight,*  
*every one against his brother, and every one against his*  
*neighbour ; city against city, and kingdom against king-*  
*dom.* When we consider the Christian world, dis-  
 tracted and desolated as it always has been, and still is,  
 by the most unrelenting and deadly wars, it is im-  
 possible not to remember our Saviour’s prediction,  
 and, remembering, not to acknowledge how abund-  
 antly it has been fulfilled, that *he came not to send*  
*peace on the earth, but a sword.* In defiance of the  
 peaceful laws of *the Prince of Peace*, Christians are as  
 contentious as if they were still *in the gall of bitterness* :  
 and so little are we imbued with that evangelical  
 charity which enjoins love even to an enemy, that,  
 like Heathens and Romans, we count it a merit and  
 a *virtue* to be warlike. And yet, in the words of  
 St. Austin, “ so abominable are wars, that even the  
 “ most just are to be detested, and, as far as possible,  
 “ avoided ;

“ avoided ; since they are scarce ever so successful, but  
 “ they bring with them more evil than good\*.”

It is of the nature of error, both in principle and practice, to spread and communicate itself: and of all errors none are so contagious as ill humours, enmities, and quarrels. As though it were not enough, and more than enough, to be captious and quarrelsome ourselves, we are at particular pains to interest and involve others in our disputes. And, unhappily for the peace of the world, the spreading of enmity is rarely attended with much difficulty; inasmuch as some are not more eager to infect, than others are willing to be infected. To render this great evil in society still more general, there are, in every community, some such *firebrands* as Solomon calls *wrathful men*, ready to *stir up strife*; ready either to blow the coals of contention, or to add fuel to a flame already kindled. These are the dark, unseen, and unnoticed, instruments of mischief, who, working under ground, produce so many concussions in our moral world; just as subterraneous fires occasion earthquakes in the natural world. And no man, whatever be his wisdom or his integrity, is out of the reach of their influence. When the object is to instigate and drive us on to a quarrel, we all submit to be dictated to, and tutored, even by our own herdsmen. The insignificance, or even the worthlessness

\* . . . . . “ Mihi sanè adeo invisa est discordia, ut veritas etiam  
 “ displiceat seditiosa.” — Erasmi Epist. ad Petr. Barbyr. Brug.



of the person who prescribes, is, in this instance, no security against the poison which is administered. Like other poisons, this too is made palatable by the admixture of some luscious ingredient ; which, in the case before us, was the prospect of gratifying an inordinate passion for revenge. A pill thus gilded we swallow without hesitation. So apt are even wise and good men to be caught by the *enticing words* of these *corrupters by flattery*, that the only means of safety, even to such men, is to *leave off contention before it be meddled with*. Let no man flatter himself that quarrels are insignificant, because they are only between ordinary individuals, and for insignificant causes. *A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump*: and a quarrel begun by a few hunters (as was the case in Canada in the last war) may, in a short time, extend from one side of the globe to the other. When *the waters of strife* are once stirred, and thrown into an agitation, the circles, which at first are small, soon widen and spread, and reach the utmost verge of the lake. Such being, in general, the beginning of quarrels, and such too the way in which they terminate, no man can be too anxious or too careful to follow the Apostle's advice, to *mark those who cause divisions*, and to avoid them.

On Abram's departure out of Egypt, he was accompanied by his faithful kinsman and fellow-pilgrim Lot. The place of their destination was *Beth-el, the place where his tent had been at the beginning*. Here, in due time, they both of them became *rich in flocks*,  
and

*and herds, and tents, as well as in silver and gold.* One consequence of this change of circumstances was, as might have been foreseen, that *the land was not able to bear them that they might dwell together.* Thus straitened in their settlement, some little interferences in their respective interests were hardly to be avoided. Unfortunately they were not avoided : disputes began, which were soon ripened into enmities ; and at length *there was a strife* between their herdsmen.

For aught that appears, both Abram and Lot were well disposed to *dwell together in unity.* There is good reason to believe, that, had they been guided only by their own judgments and their own inclinations, these slight occasions of controversy would have passed over without any unpleasing consequences. But it seems to have been the misfortune of these friendly kinsmen to have had unfriendly dependants. These subordinate persons, being themselves *enemies to peace*, soon contrived to involve their masters in a *strife* which themselves had begun. Men of mild and yielding tempers, who, in cases of competition, know the happy art gently to give way, (which may easily be done without any relinquishment of their right,) can live any where, and with any people, unmolested and unmolested ; whereas the captious and the froward will find occasions of quarrelling even in a wilderness and with brethren. The whole world does not afford room enough for such irritable tempers to dwell in, without incommoding others, or being themselves

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incommoded.

incommoded \*. Kingdoms are shaken and overturned, to gratify these perturbed spirits, whose natural element is a storm.

Had there been a better understanding between these wrangling herdsmen, unable as the land is said to have been to bear them both, they might longer have continued to dwell together, not only with pleasure, but with mutual advantage. And had they regarded the true interests of their masters, they certainly would not have suffered any little rivalships to have separated them : for, in addition to the affecting consideration that *they were brethren*, it behoved them to strengthen themselves by a close alliance, *because the Canaanite and the Perizzite then dwelled in the land* †.

Notwithstanding such strong motives both of duty and interest urged them to a contrary conduct, they suffered their judgments to be warped and blinded by their passions, and *there was a strife*. Provocations were given, and offence was taken : on the one side there were perhaps some ill-judged haughty airs of superiority ; and on the other, a no less ill-judged petulant spirit of contradiction.

If, in a discourse of this nature, I might be per-

\* “Unus Pellæo juveni non sufficit orbis ;

“Æstuat infelix angusto limite mundi.”

Juven. Sat. x. l. 168.

† These, it is probable, are the words neither of Abram nor of Lot, but of the historian.



mitted to describe the farther progress of this patriarchal *strife*, according to the ideas and the language of modern times, it is easy to suppose that the herdsmen of Abram, in such a state of mind, might have said, Your master is but a tenant at will to ours : *he gat not the land in possession by his own sword* ; nor, even now, when he is become richer, *can his own right arm save him*. You, therefore, are our tributaries ; and we have the right to exercise dominion over you. It is not for you to water your flocks at these springs, or graze them in these pastures, without our leave. These wells are not of your digging : you were not the first occupants of these fair demesnes : unsupported by us, you never could have overcome all the dangers you had to encounter on your first settling here ; nor, at this moment, is it at your cost that the *Canaanite* and the *Perizzite* are kept in awe. In consideration of your inability, we have hitherto forborne to levy any contributions on you : but you are now *rich* ; and though even yet you cannot wholly remunerate us, you may pay back some portion of your debt. Aware, however, as we are, of the perverseness of your dispositions, and judging of your future conduct from the past, we will trust nothing to your own sense of propriety, honour, and justice. You shall therefore now be taxed, and made to contribute to the common support, not at your own, but at our discretion : and we therefore resolve to make regulations and laws which shall

“bind” the whole community, and therefore you also,  
 “in all cases whatsoever.”

The usual consequence of imperiously demanding more than perhaps in wisdom we ought to have asked, is an insolent refusal of that which we had a fair title to have expected. Lot's herdsmen, no doubt, had their answer ready; and, judging from it's consequences, we may well suppose that it was sufficiently sharp and exasperating.

“We, as well as you,” they might reply, “are the  
 “denizens of Nature. She, who produced us all  
 “equal, gave no man authority over another. At  
 “the expence of our own blood, at the hazard of  
 “our own fortunes, and without the least charge to  
 “you, we effected this settlement in these distant  
 “and inhospitable wilds, filled with numerous and  
 “warlike nations of barbarians. No power on earth  
 “has a right to impose taxes, or to take the smallest  
 “proportion of our property, without our consent\*.”  
 You have already grown *rich* out of our substance.  
 Hitherto you have *eaten our fruits and drank our milk*;  
 and have been warmed with the wool which our flocks  
 did yield. You are *austere men*, who *take up what*  
*you laid not down, and reap what you have not sown.*  
 Too long have you made us your *bewers of wood, and*  
*drawers of water*; but we will now assert our natural  
 rights; we will now be our own masters, and no

\* Congress Declarations.

longer submit to be directed and controuled by you  
“in any case whatsoever.”

It may be remarked that, in these mutual charges and recriminations, the persons urging them were probably not without some reason on both sides. Had the allegations which each party produced against the other been wholly ungrounded, the *strife* which they occasioned would hardly have found so many advocates and abettors. But, with this mutual disposition in the herdsmen both of Abram and Lot to exaggerate and aggravate all the little circumstances on which it was pretended to be founded, an accommodation was now almost hopeless. Happily, however, their *strifes* were accommodated, and by means as natural and easy as they were just and generous.

It became Lot, as the younger man, as the dependant of Abram, and more especially as being under infinite obligations to him, to have made the first overtures towards a reconciliation. If he was the aggressor, it was his duty; if the injured party, it would have done him still more honour.

But, though Lot made no such sacrifice to peace, Abram did \*. “The elder, and wiser, and worthier

\* . . . . . ὁργισθεὶς πρὸς Ἀισχίνην, μετ’ οὐ πολὺ, — Οὐ διαλλαχθῆσθαι; οὐ παυσόμεθα, ἔπει, ληξόντες; ἀλλὰ ἀναμειβῆς ἵως ἂν τις ἡμᾶς ἐπὶ τῆς κύλικος φλυαρῶν διαλλάξῃ; καὶ ὅς, αἰσμένως, ἔφη. Μνημόνους τοίνυν, εἶπεν ὁ Ἀρίστιππος, ὅτι σοι πρῶτερος, πρεσβύτερος ὢν, προσῆλθον. Καὶ ὁ Ἀισχίνης, Εὐγε, ἢ τὴν Ἥραν, εὐλόγως ἔπας, ἐπὶ πολλῶ μου βελτίων ἰπάρχεις. Ἐγὼ μὲν γὰρ ἔχθρος, σὺ δὲ φίλος ἄρχεις. — Diogenes Laertius, editio Meibomii, vol. i. 4to. p. 127.



“ person relinquisheth his own right to his inferior, for peace-sake ; leaving us a noble example for our imitation\*.” He seems no sooner to have heard of the unhappy disturbances between their respective herdsmen, than (not waiting till Lot himself should see fit to take up the matter in a regular way, and state all those real or imaginary grievances about which the *strife* had been raised) with all the meekness and magnanimity of a man who is truly great, he came forward to his nephew with a CONCILIATORY PROPOSITION. He did not, at all hazards, vindicate his own herdsmen : neither did he clamorously inveigh against the supposed unreasonable jealousies of the servants of his kinsman. He was aware that such recriminations could answer no good end ; they could only lead to an endless labyrinth of *strife and debate*. With a degree of prudence, surpassed only by his benevolence, he took it for granted that his own servants, as well as those of his kinsman, had been to blame : and therefore, to prevent, if possible, any such misunderstandings in future, he proposed new terms, and a new plan of alliance.

Till now, my nephew, he might say, we have lived, if not wholly without disputes, yet without *strife* : we have experienced the ties of affection to be sufficiently strong bonds of connexion. Those other securities, which the complex interests of our growing prosperity have now rendered necessary, were not wanted

\* Poole's Annotations.

during our infant state. It is to be lamented (not that these securities are become necessary, for I might as well regret that we and our dependants are human beings, or that we are wealthy and opulent, but) that they could not be had without this interruption of our former harmony. Yet, if managed with temper and prudence, even this contest may be turned to a good account. It will oblige us to review the conditions of our union : and if, in any respect, they be found unsuitable to our present circumstances, they may, by a new modification, be rendered not less permanent than mutually advantageous. It can answer no good purpose to enquire too curiously, whether thy servants or mine have been most in fault. The probability is, both have been to blame : but we shall be still more so if we do not immediately put an end to the *strife*. How much soever thy deluded herdsmen may have sought to prejudice thee against me, I cannot believe that thou hast ever seriously wished to withhold that easy tribute of assistance which, by our patriarchal constitution, thou knowest I have a right to expect ; which I want, and thou canst give ; and which, as is well known to thee, is absolutely necessary for our common defence against *the Canaanite and the Perizzite*. Let no malicious meddler persuade thee to imagine, that I either do, or ever will, ask more. Why should I ? Is not the land mine, by the especial promise of God ? By the blessing of his providence on my honest industry, *the cattle that thou seest upon a thousand hills are mine*.

What motives then can I have, were I so disposed, to covet any thing that is thine ; much less to *take it by violence* ? *Take, then, that thine is, and go thy way : separate thyself, I pray thee, from me !* in place, but not in affection. Every other claim that might be urged, of interest, of power, or of duty, I wave : all the indignities and injuries which, during the dominion of passion, thy herdsmen have offered to mine, I overlook and forgive. I can even bear to be considered as having provoked the *strife* ; so far at least as a blameable inattention to both thy best interests and my own, through an excess of security, may be deemed a provocation. Waving the right which I may be supposed to have to look for the first overtures of reconciliation from thee, I am contented to become a petitioner for the renewal of our love. *Let there, I pray thee, be no strife between thee and me !* If, unhappily, we do not retain so much influence over our respective herdsmen as to prevent their *striving*, let us not suffer them to involve us in their quarrel : *let there be no strife* BETWEEN THEE AND ME. If neither a sense of duty, nor a sense of interest, can prevent our taking some part in their *strife*, let us not think it much to sacrifice our resentment to our affections. If we cannot live together in peace, we can part in peace. To part is no wish of mine ; I recommend it only as the least of two evils : but it certainly is better to part than to quarrel ; better, chiefly, because we are brethren.

However disposed to accommodation and peace

Abram



Abram was, Lot appears to have listened with far too much complacency to the peevish remonstrances of his herdsmen; and, adopting their tenets, he could not long hesitate about conforming to their conduct. Though he certainly had no good reasons to give for refusing to close with Abram's proposition for peace, he yet was resolute in determining to reject it: and so, being unable to answer, there is nothing unfair in the supposition that he either misunderstood or misrepresented it. I can even suppose that the overture made by Abram, towards a reconciliation, was interpreted into a concession extorted from fear: and in that view it was easy to improve it into an argument with him and his herdsmen for keeping up the breach, and even becoming more violent. Possibly these factious herdsmen now likewise began to fill the head of their too pliant lord with projects of grandeur. He had already beheld, with longing eyes, the rich plains of Jordan: and he seems to have little regarded what were the manners of the people, so that he might but rule over them. Impatient of restraint, and longing for independence, he yet was not satisfied to become his own master unless he also gave law to others: though, in the eye of reason, it certainly would have been more to his honour to have remained the ally and the friend of Abram *at the place of the altar by Bethel*, than it could be even to preside over the *men of Sodom*, who were *wicked, and sinners before God exceedingly*. Thus tutored, and thus disposed, we are not to wonder that, on Abram's suggesting

gesting an idea of parting, Lot eagerly took him at his word, and *journeyed east, and dwelled in the cities of the plain, and pitched his tent towards Sodom.*

There is no one topic of instruction on which it is more needless to accumulate argument or evidence than on this, that mankind are often made miserable by the accomplishment of their wishes. It is a lesson which every man's own experience can hardly fail to have taught him : and yet, as though we were determined not to be made wise by experience, conviction is impressed upon conviction in vain ; mankind are still tenacious of their supposed rights and privileges, and still contend for them with heat and anger ; and thus lose their peace of mind and their happiness, without gaining even the objects for which they strove. That, as individuals, we should mistake phantoms for realities, is not perhaps (considering the weakness of our judgments, and the strength of our passions,) more than might be expected ; but it might have been hoped that such volumes of instruction as the history of the world affords would have had more influence on the conduct of communities. There is not an history of a nation, ancient or modern, which does not furnish instances in abundance of their having often egregiously mistaken their own best interests. When *all the men of Schechem*, as if surfeited with the felicity they enjoyed under Gideon, (calling themselves the people of Israel) furnished *Abimelech with threescore and ten pieces of silver to hire light and vain persons to follow him*, they succeeded

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ed in their project, and Abimelech became their king : though the only reason given for their engaging in such a revolution is, that *their hearts inclined to follow Abimelech*. The consequences to be expected from such a proceeding were not more natural than they were just : *all the evil of the men of Schechem did God render upon their heads ; and upon them came the curse of Jotham, the son of Jerubbaal*. It has been, and it is, *the curse* of men every where, in their collective capacities, as well as individuals, to mistake change for reformation. Not contented with excellence, we foolishly grasp at perfection ; and, in the pursuit of it, frequently plunge into the very mischiefs from which we fancied we were escaping. Lot was happy with Abram, and might long have remained so, had he been so fortunate as to avoid the suspicions, the jealousies, and the strifes instilled into him, and fomented by the *busy-bodies* around him. He parted from Abram on the pretence of finding peace and quietness elsewhere ; and was soon involved in a war, which ended in the utter destruction of his property, and in his own captivity : and had he not been rescued by that benevolent relation, whose friendship and protection, in a vain confidence of his own strength, he had just before too wantonly slighted, he might long have mourned in bondage those mischiefs which he had drawn down on his own head.

You have no doubt anticipated the application which I propose to make of this interesting story : it has, indeed, so near a resemblance to our present situation,



situation, and the reflections with which I have accompanied the narration of it are so apposite to our circumstances, that I seem, in some sort, to have precluded the necessity of bringing it more home to us. *A strife*, alas ! is begun between the herdsmen of our Parent State and our herdsmen ; which, unless it can be accommodated, will too probably be fatal at least to one of the parties, if not to both. Happy would it be for us, as well as for our kinsmen, who we say have *sought this quarrel against us*, if in this dreadful moment of suspense, whilst on every side those *who imagine mischief in their hearts are continually gathering together for war*, some gentle spirit would arise and persuade us, as erst Moses was persuaded, to *send messengers out of this our wilderness of Kedemoth, unto Sibon king of Heshbon, with words of peace*.

It can, I think, admit of no dispute, that an accommodation between the Colonies and the Mother Country, on almost any terms, is infinitely more to be desired by both countries than even the most signal successes in war. In the latter way, to succeed is to become a separate people : not as Abram and Lot became a separate people, whilst yet they still continued to be friends ; but as having no longer any community either of interest or affection, as perfect aliens to each other, and, in short, as totally distinct and different nations. There seems no possibility of any middle course. Considering then this complete separation as the most probable consequence of success in war, it much imports us not only to count the

cost,

cost, but also the value of the acquisition, if haply we should obtain it. Independency is the forbidden fruit which our tempters hold out to us : and it is our duty, hardly in a less degree than it was the duty of our first parents, to calculate the probability there is, that their promises shall be made good to us, and we *be as gods*. Let us also calculate how much more probable it is that *in the day we eat thereof we shall surely die*.

I believe there are few instances of a people who had once been united, who still spoke the same language, and still professed the same religion, becoming distinct nations. The only one among ancient states, that I can at present recollect, is the Jewish nation ; which, in the days of Jeroboam, was divided into the two kingdoms of Judah and Israel. This separation is in every view a case so much in point, that a few strictures on it cannot be deemed undeserving of your consideration.

When the folly and the wickedness of Jeroboam had once made a division in the Jewish kingdom, though it was lamented by all the wise and worthy men on both sides, it never was in the power of any of them again cordially to unite the two parties. They no sooner became a divided and distinct people, than the systems of their politics also became divided and distinct, and not seldom completely opposite. The few common points, which it was their common interest to promote, were soon neglected by both ;

both ; and, instead of a common good, both at length naturally pursued ends of their own.

They were, no doubt, both of them equally interested in the protection of their common country from foreign invasions. But even this was rendered difficult, if not impracticable, by the circumstance of their having become separate governments : it availed them little that, in the great points of country and religion, they might be said to be still one and the same people. Their constant mutual suspicions and jealousies, and sometimes their disputes and their quarrels, proved a never-failing source of detriment to themselves, and advantage to their enemies. Religion too felt her share of these evils ; it being hardly possible for her to escape unhurt amidst such confusions of the State. Disputes and contentions, even on the most reasonable grounds, generally terminate in uncharitableness : and when charity faileth, piety, and even purity of faith, seldom survive long.

If it happened, as it sometimes did, that there was a good understanding between the two kingdoms, so that they could say to each other (in the language which appears to have been the established phrase to express the closest alliance and amity between these two kingdoms) *I am as thou art, my people as thy people, and my horses as thy horses* ; the alliance was never sincere, the amity never cordial. In countries so circumstanced it would have been almost romantic to expect it ; for, however common and equally interesting



interesting the cause might be in which they jointly engaged, it was scarcely possible for them to pursue it with the same zeal and ardour as if they had still lived under the obligation and enjoyment of the same common government and common religion.

The final result of their disunion was, that *Rebo-boam assembled all the house of Judah, with the tribe of Benjamin, an hundred and fourscore thousand men, which were warriors, to fight against Israel.* Nay, such, as the prophet speaks, was *the envy that Ephraim bore to Judah, and such the vexation that Judah gave to Ephraim*, that there does not appear ever to have been an hearty reconciliation between them. For, *a brother offended is harder to be won than a strong city; and their contentions are like the bars of a castle.* Were it not so common for those who have loved much, on the breaking out of a quarrel, thus suddenly to *change their good-will into hatred*, the enmity of *Rekab, the son of Remaliah*, the king of Israel, (who actually entered into an alliance with *Rezin, king of Syria*, in the hope that by their united strength they might completely subjugate the kingdom of Judah,) would be utterly incredible. After various conflicts, by which, as had been foretold, they were rendered weak, *as a reed that is shaken in the water*; both became an easy prey to their common enemies, and were carried away captive, the one into Assyria, and the other into Babylon.

The successful assertion of their liberties against the unwieldy and oppressive power of Spain by the  
people

people of Holland, now called the United States, was rather throwing off a foreign yoke, to which they had always submitted with reluctance, than revolting against a power and a people of whom they themselves were an essential part : and therefore, however glorious to them or instructive to the world it may be, it cannot with propriety be drawn into a parallel with the cases now under consideration. The separation of Portugal from Spain, considering the juxtaposition of the two kingdoms, the sameness of their language, religion and manners, might have been regarded as almost a case in point, were it not that that revolution, like a similar one in China, affected chiefly the family on the throne. Portugal was a distinct kingdom, and perfectly independent of Spain for many centuries before the crown was placed in 1640 on the head of the duke of Braganza : nor was any considerable change made by it, in the form of government, the constitution, or the laws of the country. Still, however pure the intentions, however honourable the conduct of those who effected the two great revolutions in question, it is by no means so easy to prove, as it is to assert, that in either case the people have been eventually great gainers by their detachment from Spain. Had not the government of Spain become so unaccountably but miserably degenerated as it now is, I think it is almost capable of demonstration, that not only Spain would have been a greater and happier country ; but Holland, and Portugal also, (which are and ever must

must be so weak in themselves, that, existing as they do through the courtesy of the surrounding kingdoms, they can hardly be called Independent States,) might have been more secure, and of course more happy, even as the subjects of Spain, than they are with the shadow only of independency.

I would it were necessary to go into the history only of past ages, or of foreign nations, to shew the fatal effects of these *fallings out among brethren*!—But, alas! the history of the last century, and what then passed among ourselves, is a perpetual lesson, at least to British subjects, to *leave off contention before it be meddled with*.

The unhappy disputes in the reign of the first Charles began, as ours have now begun, about matters which, comparatively speaking, were but of little moment; and for which, every candid man must charitably believe, the leaders on both sides, had they foreseen what was to happen, never would have involved the nation in all the horrors of a civil war. The points in dispute were not at first difficult to settle; and no doubt the well-meaning (for many such there were in both parties) would have determined them as easily and as happily as Abram's difference with Lot, had they not, fatally for themselves and their country, relied on the regular constitutional interference of Parliament. “They thought, as most men did, the government to be so firmly settled, that it could “neither be shaken from within nor from without; “and that nothing less could hurt them than a ge-



“ neral confusion both of law and gospel. But, they  
“ did not foresee how easily and how soon that con-  
“ fusion might be brought about \*.”

They easily might have foreseen, though they did not, what fatal *confusions* must follow, on their first error of suffering themselves to be authoritatively dictated to by persons unknown to the laws, who began their reformation by overturning the Established Church. They might easily have foreseen what treatment the State would receive, from observing that which the Church did receive. All that was sound in doctrine, all that was decent in worship, degenerated into enthusiasm and confusion. For, however the several sects conspired together at first, and united to destroy the National Church, they united for nothing else. It was unnatural that they should unite in any measure; and therefore, no sooner was the only purpose attained which they proposed to themselves by their union, than they returned as it were with fresh force to their innate habits of disputing and quarrelling. Every sect attempted to establish itself: and though they had all disclaimed imposition and coercion of every kind in matters of religion whilst themselves were the minority, they no sooner got the power into their own hands than they themselves practised them with great rigour. As if bent on realizing all that their own distempered imaginations had pourtrayed, they persecuted all who

\* Clarendon, vol. i. p. 102, 8vo.

differed from them, with as much rancour as they had affected to apprehend was directed against themselves.

These things were *written for our learning*: and the history of those dreadful times may teach us, *in this our day, the things that belong to our peace, before they be hid from our eyes*. Two things seem now to be placed before us, as the objects of our present choice; the gaining wisdom from the experience of others, and the obtaining it by costly experiments of our own. To affirm that the former is as effectual as the latter, might seem presumptuous; but we are well warranted in affirming, that, if it be not our own faults, much wisdom may be obtained from the experience of others. Instead therefore of rashly committing yourselves to an hazardous experiment of your own, permit me to recommend it to you to consult the instructive page of history; to read, as I myself have just read, our English Livy, Lord Clarendon. His History of the Grand Rebellion is not only the history of some bad men conducting with great ability, and still greater success, a bad cause; but, as a perpetual warning to all succeeding generations, it shews how thousands of good men were insensibly absorbed in the vortex of party, in which both they and all that was good perished \*. Instead  
of

\* Judge Blackstone speaks of these men and their proceedings with great judgment and impartiality, when he says: "that those popular leaders (who in all ages have called themselves the people)

of listening to the declamations of those artful men, who gradually lead us to think less and less of the whole of our excellent Constitution, by incessantly inveighing against some of it's parts, it will teach us to admire, to reverence, and, if possible, to preserve for ever that admirable system which was modelled by the wisdom, and has been supported by the virtue, of our ancestors ; and can be destroyed only by the folly and the vice of their posterity. By the examples of those times, we see how dangerous the heats even of honest men are to themselves as well as to others, when they are not regulated by prudence : for such men are, by their warmth, more easily led to adopt measures planned for them by those who have some design in every thing that they do or say ; than those cautious children of phlegm, who, if they seldom delight their friends by the performance of any truly great action, as seldom distress them by being rash and precipitate. And when once, either through the intemperate zeal or the improvidence of good men, ancient land-marks are suffered to be removed, it is rarely in the power even of the honest part of the community to bring back government to it's former dignity, or religion to it's primitive purity.

“ began to grow insolent and ungovernable : their insolence soon rendered them desperate : and despair at length forced them to join with a set of military hypocrites and enthusiasts, who overturned the Church and Monarchy, and proceeded with deliberate solemnity to the trial and murder of their Sovereign.”——

Blackstone, Comment, vol. iv. p. 438.

That



That many wrong things are thus done among us, we are all ready to acknowledge ; as also to acknowledge, and even to boast of, the excellency of our Constitution. Yet, contrary to our duty, contrary to our interests, and contrary, it may be, to our real sentiments, when we dare to avow them, and when our judgments are not inflamed by our passions, we help, by our heedlessness or our levity, to undermine, if not to subvert, it's best supports, legal liberty and the established religion. I am at a loss to say to what cause we are to ascribe such inconsistency, if it be not to a want of penetration in us, to discern the consequence of other men's principles, or else to a want of resolution to maintain our own.

Whatever may be the wishes or the aims of our herdsmen, I am far from thinking that a majority of our people, if left to themselves, have any purpose of driving the *strife* already begun between us and our fellow herdsmen beyond the Atlantic to extremities. Even those among us who look for the worst issue of it that can happen, I mean a separation effected by war, must be inconsistent, and at variance with their own professions, if they would not be better pleased to obtain a separation without a war. [Yet, whilst every step which our herdsmen take unquestionably tends to a separation, is it not extraordinary that, in all their declarations and remonstrances, they persist officiously to disavow their having any such intentions ?] Were their policy as direct as I fear it is determined, they certainly might without blame, and

I should imagine with advantage, long ago have spoken out, and avowed what some of their subordinate agents now begin to insinuate, by hinting, in allusion to my text, Let our progenitor and kinsman, with whom we are now at variance, in imitation of Abram, bid us separate ourselves from him quietly and peaceably as Lot did, and all may yet be well.

It was not on this side of the Atlantic, I believe, that this notion was first broached : and, of all the proposals which those who from any motive are adverse to the continuance of the union have yet suggested, this, no doubt, is by far the most plausible. Yet this, as well as some other projects, carries suspicion along with it, if it were only from it's having been produced in these unfettled times ; times distinguished chiefly by Utopian projects of government. It is, moreover, to be listened to with caution and distrust, from it's having been so eagerly adopted and patronized by those of our herdsmen, who, it is to be feared, have at any rate determined on a separation.

Sundry circumstances have concurred to give this proposal some celebrity. It has been brought forward by an author\*, of whose abilities and integrity the world with great reason entertains a very high opinion. The difficulties in the way of an accommodation are almost insurmountable. A resolution on the part of the Parent State, and the adherents to the Parent State in this country, not to separate, seems

\* Dr. Tucker,

too certainly to threaten both countries with a civil war : and should those who are adverse to a separation be so fortunate as to be able at last to effect their purpose of quelling the refractory and the rebellious, all the reward they can hope or wish for is only to be just as they have always been, and what, but for these disputes, they might and would be at this moment. This, however desirable, it is argued, is not worth what it must cost. To enforce the submission of America by arms, will probably cost more than the value of the fee-simple of the country. And no instance can be given, it is said, of a people having gone so far in the way of resistance as the party in this country has now gone, and afterwards retreating till they were forced to do so. It will infinitely redound to the honour of those with whom the determination of this momentous question must finally rest, if, in the face of all these discouragements, they can resolve still to pursue the plain though difficult path of duty, and, without either a voluntary separation, (which, as a remedy, is pregnant with consequences almost as dangerous as the disease,) or an enforced submission, at last be able to heal our *strifes*.

Were the question to be determined by present expediency, it is possible the arguments in favour of a separation might be found to be the strongest. But, as such a separation would be a new thing in the world, (the instance in my text, which alone can pretend to be a parallel to it, being certainly as to this particular point a feeble and imperfect parallel, in as much as



between Abram and Lot there subsisted no relation of supremacy or subjection,) and as also there are in this vast continent many thousands of respectable men, who, considering allegiance as a duty, find it impossible to bring themselves to retain or relinquish it just as mere convenience may seem to suggest, we hope at least to be permitted to pause before we determine.

There is an objection of no ordinary magnitude at the very threshold of this novel proposal. It has never yet been proved, nor, in my humble opinion, can it ever be proved, that the Parent State can do what is asked; that is to say, can, without a breach of the Constitution, voluntarily withdraw or forbear it's government over America\*. [Allegiance and protection are not merely reciprocal duties, entirely dependent the one on the other. [Each duty continues to be equally obligatory, and in force, whether the other be performed or not.] There is no authority to prove, that a failure of duty on one side will justify a like failure on the other. The disobedience of the child, so far from furnishing the parent with a pretence for

\* Bp. Taylor, in his *Ductor Dubitantium*, Book iii. chap. 3. p. 137, in answer to a question, "Whether it be lawful, and in the power of the supreme prince or magistrate, to aliene, or lessen, his princely rights, or to give away any parts of his kingdom?" says, . . . . . "This is certain, that where the princes are trustees of the people, or where the right of succession is in a family by law, or immemorial time, no prince can prejudice his heir, or the people that trusted him. Nothing is here to be done without consent."

withdrawing his authority, is the strongest reason for exerting it. Were it otherwise, there could be no such crime as rebellion; nor any right in the magistrate to punish it. Desertion, or abdication, in governors, seems to stand on the same footing of criminality as defection and rebellion in the governed.

If Great Britain can, merely on her own pleasure, cast off America, it seems to follow, on every principle of reason and law, that America must be equally at liberty to cast off Great Britain. On such principles all ideas of stability or permanency in government are visionary: a common partnership in trade is not more easily dissolved, than all the strong bonds of government may be snapped asunder.

But, it will be alledged, perhaps, that no injury can be done or sustained, if, like Abram and Lot, both parties agree to separate\*. This, no doubt, puts the question on new and more tenable ground. It must be remembered, however, that, even on this principle, every man can answer only for himself. But, to justify a general separation, the laws of society seem to require that every individual in the community should voluntarily step forward, and declare it to be his settled and determined wish to separate: for, this is not a case in which a majority, even supposing such a majority to exist, can bind a minority†; inasmuch as majorities can rightfully determine for minorities, only when the persons composing such

\* *Volenti non fit injuria.*

† See Hobbes, of Dominion, chap. vi. § 20.

majorities are known to and recognized by the laws, and act agreeably to the forms of the Constitution.

The constituted powers of any Nation may no doubt, if they see fit, alter the whole code of it's laws: but as such powers were constituted avowedly to conform and act agreeably to the Constitution, the Constitution itself it is not within their competency to alter. Like the laws of the Medes and Persians, that is unalterable; it can only be dissolved by a dissolution of society. But, admitting that the unanimous vote of a Nation is competent to change it's Constitution, the very statement of the supposition implies, that without such unanimity it cannot be changed. Abstractedly considered, or merely on the footing of natural rights, no good reason can be given, why, in any case, a minority should be bound by a majority. The principle has been adopted into practice merely from considerations of prudence and convenience; and can take place only in regulated societies, that is to say, in communities governed by laws: and those laws have determined and specified the cases, in which alone minorities shall be bound by majorities. However numerous, then, or however respectable any majorities may be, they have no power to determine for the most insignificant minorities, if they are not recognized by the laws. Any attempt to enforce submission to their decisions is unlawful and oppressive; and if, on applying to the law of the land, redress cannot be obtained, the Constitution is infringed, and Society dissolved.



If, in defiance of the laws, a mere plurality of votes were sufficient to compel a compliance with the determinations of any bodies of men not constitutionally empowered to determine for others, endless confusions and inconveniencies would ensue. Questions of the utmost moment might sometimes be determined by a single vote, more or less. A point which to-day was determined in the affirmative, might to-morrow be rescinded, either by the death of one of the parties voting on that side of the question, or by the coming of age of one or more persons who till then were not competent to vote. Thus (as has just before been observed) all ideas of durability or stability, which compose the very essence of a Constitution, must be given up.

The only rational idea of civil liberty, or (which is the same thing) of a legitimate and good government, as to this point, is, when the great body of the people are trained and led habitually to submit to and acquiesce in some fixed and steady principles of conduct. It is essential, moreover, to Liberty, that such principles shall be of power sufficient to controul the arbitrary and capricious wills of mankind; which, whenever they are not so controuled, are found to be dangerous and destructive to the best interests of society. The primary aim, therefore, of all well-framed Constitutions is, to place man, as it were, out of the reach of his own power, and also out of the power of others as weak as himself, by placing him under the power of law. To counteract that aim (and to do so is the object of all self-constituted

constituted assemblies) is to carry back social man to his supposed original independence, and to throw him once more into what has been called a state of Nature. (In our own case, it is violently pulling down an old, well-poised Constitution, arbitrarily to introduce, in it's stead, what, if it be not anarchy, must at best be a democracy.) Now, it ought never to be out of the recollection of mankind, that democracies, even when established without either tumult or tyranny, and by the very general though perhaps not unanimous consent of the community, not contented with an equality of rights, in theory at least, naturally aim at an equality of possessions. That, to establish such a principle, or to promote measures which are likely to lead to it's establishment, majorities may always be easily obtained, will hardly be disputed. Votes are easily collected, not only to equalize property, but to destroy all those artificial distinctions in society which are created by property. Even that alone would be an evil of an incalculable extent: but, the evil of levelling property goes yet infinitely farther. It destroys all the usual motives to exertion and industry; and, with them, a long train of concomitant virtues: above all, it destroys security, which forms one of the most endearing charms of the social state. Popular, however, as this principle of universal suffrage, disguised under the seducing title of appealing to the sovereign will, or the majesty of the people, (strange expressions now first brought into vogue!) cannot but be, even it's warmest abettors have found it to be inconvenient

inconvenient and impracticable. In some districts, of no inconsiderable importance, it has not been in the power of our reformers, either to detach the people from their old Constitution, or to attach them to a new one. They cannot be prevailed upon even to assume the appearance of being disposed to do so. This is the case with respect to the inhabitants of that large tract of country called Vermont, and also with the settlers on our own frontiers near the Kanawa\*. To save appearances, then, our herdsmen are pleased to allow, that if any colony should see fit not to come into their novel schemes, they have a right to follow their own judgments. However inconsistent this may be with their general doctrines, or general conduct, we thank them for the concession: though, after all, nothing more is conceded to such supposed colony or colonies, than, I imagine, was long ago granted to the smaller States of Italy and Germany, by the larger ones which surround them. The concession, however, virtually admits, that if a colony has a right to stand out, so has any particular county, parish, or family, or even an individual. On what principle then are the thousands of unfortunate persons, who are shocked at the guilt of violating their oaths of allegiance, and therefore refuse to subscribe to the wild notions which are now so industriously circulated, subjected to have their estates confiscated, and their persons proscribed? I own, such conduct seems to me

\* This has since been erected into a new State, under the name of Kentucky; as is the case also with Vermont.



to be the confounding of all clear ideas of moral justice in our public capacities; and to establish might, as the only criterion of right.

From all these deductions it appears to be proved, that Government can, with any shew of justice, withhold protection only from those who individually express their desire to break off from the Parent State. What proportion those may bear to the whole community, though I am not wholly ignorant, I pretend not to have ascertained with any precision: but certainly they fall far short of the numbers which are so ostentatiously boasted of\*.

If,

\* I am aware that it is still the fashion to speak confidently of the universality of the revolt of America. But, however peremptorily this may be asserted, I must be permitted to declare, that it neither is, nor ever was, my opinion, that the people of America, properly so called, were generally favourable to the revolt. My reasons for this assertion are, the many and severe laws which during the contest were passed against non-jurors. Those persons must tax the leaders of the revolt with great weakness, who suppose that such rigour was exercised through mere wantonness. I remember to have heard it asserted, by one who had good opportunities of knowing, and who was not in the habit of asserting things rashly, that more Britons fought against Great Britain, and more Americans against America, than the natives of either country for their own native country. There is, however, direct evidence, that this opinion concerning the numbers of Loyalists in America was not held only by Loyalists. "The number of those who are in reality malecontents in America, are not so small as may be imagined; nor are their hopes and views so humble as many suppose." See a shrewd pamphlet, printed at Philadelphia in 1784, intitled, "Mentor's Letter to Phocion," p. 20. More direct proof could be obtained

If, then, it be not thought unreasonable that this wish of a portion of our fellow-subjects should be indulged, let them, after the example of Lot, choosing either the right hand or the left, *journey eastward*, and, pitching their tents where they list, leave to us, whose chief anxiety is, at any rate, and by any means, to avoid a *strife*, this our *Canaan*, and it's ancient government; with which (whether it be in wisdom or in folly it seems not to concern them to enquire) we are contented. By such conduct alone, their practice will be consistent with their professions. That their adopting even the moderate plan here recommended to

obtained only by a knowledge of circumstances; some of which are almost too minute for observation, and some perhaps hardly safe to promulge. One fact, of some moment in this enquiry, fell under my own notice. The first popular elections that were made without the authority of law, were made by a mere handful of the people; and those too of ordinary character and condition. The county of Prince George's, in which I last resided, was one of the largest, richest, and most populous, in the settled parts of the rich province of Maryland: and in that (I affirm, on my own knowledge) the members to the first Provincial Convention, who were to prepare the way, and did prepare it, for the First Congress, were chosen by three persons only, of no considerable rank or property.

Nor let it be thought an improbable circumstance, that a whole people should have been made so materially to contribute to an event, of which a very large number of them totally disapproved. This was the case in the Grand Rebellion; as was abundantly proved at the Restoration. "After all this," says the noble historian, "when a man might reasonably believe that less than an universal defection of three nations could not have reduced a great king to so ugly a fate, it is most certain that, in that very hour when he

to them would subject both them and us to many and great disadvantages, is not denied : still they will be less than they must be if we pursue the *strife* in the way it is begun. And as, in prosecuting their own purposes, they little regard either our inclinations or our interest, what right have they to expect that we should

“ was thus publicly murdered in the sight of the sun, he had as great a share in the hearts and affections of his subjects in general, “ was as much beloved, esteemed, and longed for by *the people in general* of the three nations, as any of his predecessors had ever “ been.”——Lord Clarendon’s Hist. book xi. p. 199.

Alas ! there is no restoration in America, to which I may appeal, in proof that the people of that country loved this, even when they were driven to rebel against it ! But the time may come, and let us hope that even now it is at no great distance, when this proof shall not be wanting ; when this now-separated people may again turn to their once honoured parent, not only with surprise and sorrow at what is past, but with all their pristine tenderness and affection ; when, looking back with wonder and gratitude on the long course of untroubled security and quietness which they enjoyed under the mild government of this country, and comparing it with the confusions, the turbulence, and the real oppressions of subsequent periods, they may naturally be led to wish once more to become (what in a state of separation neither they nor we can ever hope again to be) one great and happy people.

Whatever opinion the Public may form of Mr. Burke’s sagacity and consistency, or of Dr. Franklin’s sincerity, (which in this instance at least even I am disposed to believe,) the following quotation, besides it’s being remarkable on other accounts, clearly shews that even Mr. Burke never believed that the great body of the people in America aimed at independence. In defending himself, he says : “ If the principles of all he has said and wrote on the occasion “ be viewed with common temper, the gentlemen of the party  
“ (Mr.



should be solicitous about theirs? We surely have as good a right to preserve the union, even at the expence of some displeasure and some disadvantage to them, as they can have to dissolve it, to our ruin.

If both the Mother Country and the Colonies understood, and would pursue, their true interests, their present union might undoubtedly be continued

“ (Mr. Fox’s) will perceive, that, on a supposition that the Americans had rebelled merely to enlarge their liberty, Mr. Burke would have thought very differently of the American cause. What might have been in the secret thoughts of some of their Leaders, it is impossible to say. As far as a man, so locked up as Dr. Franklin, could be expected to communicate his ideas, I believe he opened them to Mr. Burke. It was, I think, the very day before he set out for America, that a very long conversation passed between them, and with a greater air of openness on the Doctor’s side than Mr. Burke had observed in him before. In this discourse Dr. Franklin lamented, and with apparent sincerity, the separation which he feared was inevitable between Great Britain and her Colonies. America, he said, would never again see such happy days as she had passed under the protection of England. He observed, that ours was the only instance of a great empire, in which the most distant parts and members had been as well governed as the metropolis and it’s vicinage; but that the Americans were going to lose the means which secured to them this rare and precious advantage. The question with them was not, whether they were to remain as they had been before the troubles? for better, he allowed, they could not hope to be; but, whether they were to give up so happy a situation without a struggle? Mr. Burke had several other conversations with him about that time, in none of which, soured and exasperated as his mind certainly was, did he discover any other wish in favour of America, than for a security to it’s ancient condition.” — Mr. Burke’s Appeal from the New to the Old Whigs, p. 37.

much to their mutual advantage. Even Dr. Tucker recommends it to Great Britain to relinquish her government of America, only on the idea that America desires it. Now, this is a point of too much moment to be assumed upon trust. And you and I, who live in America, and are deeply interested in knowing the truth, can affirm, and on as good evidence as the case admits of, that the people of America do not desire a separation: and that a very large number (we think, a majority) do now, and ever will, regard a revolt from Great Britain as the greatest evil and heaviest calamity that can possibly befall us. Let the herdsmen of the Parent State, if, like ours, they too are infatuated with the visionary projects of the times, the spawn of distempered politics, grant independency to those who wish for it: but, to cast off those also who can have offended only by being perhaps intemperately loyal; to forbear to govern those who are willing to be governed, is not only injustice, but tyranny; as wantonly throwing us into the hands of the worst of tyrants, after having encouraged us to provoke their bitterest enmity.

It is by no means my intention to attempt to vindicate the herdsmen either of America or Great Britain. The want of policy in those of Great Britain is acknowledged in it's fullest extent; and, were I so disposed, I could soon find materials for many bitter invectives against them. Their whole conduct, indeed, has been so utterly void of counsel, that I seem to have no right to tax those persons with being superstitious,

stitious, who ascribe it to a preternatural infatuation. By a singular fatality of error, they are chargeable with having done both too much and too little; too much in the way of hostility for reconciliation, and too little for compulsion. That they wish for a reconciliation, we cannot but believe: yet, every step they have taken, since the dispute began, has, through their folly, or our perverseness, or both, tended only to widen the breach; tended to make new enemies, and lose old friends. But, in their error, they have only been weak; whilst it is our greater reproach to have been both weak and wicked. Error in them is no excuse for guilt in us: but having, in no slight degree, their error, as well as our own guilt, to answer for, our reflections must needs be formed of every thing that can aggravate distress, with very little to relieve it.

The Mother Country is, for aught I know, chargeable with a thousand errors in her management of the Colonies: this only cannot be laid to her charge, that she has ever governed them with rigour, or oppressed them. And yet it is solely on a charge of injustice, and rigour and oppression, that our herdsmen have stirred up this *strife*.

As to the ostensible point in debate, the right of taxation, it has been fully and well argued on both sides; and it is not my intention to go over this beaten ground again. But, however popular our side of the question may be, it has not appeared to me, that we have any thing else respecting it in our favour.



That the Parent State has been unwise, I readily grant; contending only, that she has never been unjust: for, it has again and again been proved, that she has been right in her intentions, and, I think, right also in her principle. But, if the right of taxation was ever more than an ostensible and specious pretence for the quarrel, it has now ceased to be so. On that point our herdsmen no longer insist; they no longer hold out an hope of reconciliation: all our debates now turn entirely on the prudence and propriety, the necessity and the wisdom, of separating. And yet there is no nation with whom we can be connected either so naturally, or so advantageously, as with our Parent State\*. It is as little the interest as the duty of Great Britain to require of us any thing unreasonable; and we must be no less wanting to ourselves than to her, if we withhold from her any reasonable thing that she may see fit to ask of us. We have long and often experienced her justice and her generosity. If, therefore, through the degeneracy, or the imperfection, of all political wisdom and prin-

\* Great Britain might, with particular pertinency, have said to her Colonies: "*Vobis verò nulla opportunior amicitia nostrâ; primum quòd procul absumus; in quo offensæ minimum, gratia par ac si propè adessemus.*"——Sall. Bell. Jugurth. sub finem.

"Simul et Asia id cogitet, nullam à se neque belli externi neque discordiarum domesticarum calamitatem defuturam fuisse, si hoc imperio non teneretur. Id autem imperium cum retineri sine VECTIGALIBUS nullo modo possit, æquo animo parte aliquâ suorum fructuum pacem sibi sempiternam redimat atque otium."——Cicero, lib. i. ep. ad Q. Fratrem.

ciples,

ciples, she now seems to us no longer just or generous, let us, in common candour, hope and believe that she neither can nor will long persist in a temper that must be allowed to be unnatural to her. I do not love to dwell thus only on her miscarriages. Offences, no doubt, have been given : but, forgetting that we also have offended, and that in us it is less pardonable to offend, we are taught to exaggerate all the errors and the failings of our Parent State.

Even I remember the time when an indignity offered to Great Britain would, in America, have been regarded as an affront offered to America. How often have we listened, even till attention was wearied, to lavish encomiums on ourselves, by some of ourselves, on the score of our attachment to that country, which, till now, it was our pride habitually to call our HOME ! During the late war, at the peace, and even since the peace, we were almost officious in presenting loyal addresses\* : and in them, if words have any meaning; all that seemed greatly to trouble us was, that we were not likely to be soon called on to sacrifice our lives and fortunes in the service of the Crown. Away with such loyalty, and such affection !—loyalty that is liberal of words only, and proffers it's services most when they are least wanted ; and affection that can be attached and engaged only by being coaxed and careffed. The moment that our Parent ceases to foster and fondle us, or that we imagine she ceases,

\* In like manner James the Second was almost overpowered with loyal addresses, just before his abdication.

our affections are withdrawn; and, instead of loving and reverencing the mother that bore us, we vilify and insult her.

But, if love be a voluntary offering, gratitude is a debt: and surely it is not a little that the Parent State is entitled to claim from us on the score of past benefits. With the utmost propriety might she address us in the pathetic words of the Lord to the infant in the xxvith chapter of Ezekiel: *I have caused thee to multiply as the bud of the field, and thou hast increased, and art waxen great; and thou art come to excellent ornaments: thy breasts are fashioned, and thine hair is grown; whereas thou wast naked and bare.* And what Socrates said to his friends just before his death, might be no bad rule of conduct for us in this our day of trial: "How unjustly so ever we are treated, it never can be our interest to practise injustice; much less to retort the injuries of our parents, or our country; *and by our example teach disobedience to the laws.*"

O that, whether from motives of prudence, interest, gratitude, or duty, our ancient habits of amity might yet be renewed! and that, to effect this blessed purpose, some wise and good men, uncontrouled by the interested herdsmen, would arise; and, in the *still small voice* of reason, gentle in it's manner, but powerful in it's effects, soothe and calm our ruffled minds! If wise and good, it is of little moment whether they dwell on this, or on that, side of the Atlantic. We thank God, that there are many such in Great Britain; and many such also in America. In their estimation, the

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the cause is equally their own: their interests, and their views, are the same. Such men can be opposed by those only who oppose every thing; and, more especially, every thing which promises to restore order and quietness to government. To render their opposition, if it be possible, ineffectual, permit me to recommend it to such men (copying the conduct of their opponents in this alone) to associate; and whether they live in the east or in the west, taking it out of the hands of factious herdsmen, make a common cause of our *strife*.

Seeing, as we do, *brethren striving*, let us, like the meek servant of God, interpose and exert our best endeavours to *set them at one again*; saying, as surely we well may, *Sirs, ye are brethren! why do ye wrong one to another?*

Thus, and thus only, may we hope, by the blessing of God, to be *made one nation in the land upon the mountains of Israel, and to have one king over us all; and that we shall be no more two nations, nor divided into two kingdoms any more at all.*

## DISCOURSE IX.

## ON THE CHARACTER OF ABSALOM.\*

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2 SAMUEL, ch. xviii. ver. 33.

*And the king was much moved, and went up to the chamber over the gate, and wept: and as he went, thus he said, O my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom! would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son!*

IF ever any man knew the art of happily surmounting trouble; or, when that was impracticable, of bearing it with becoming fortitude; it was David. It may seem extraordinary, then, that he, who through the whole course of an eventful life had been exercised in trials of this nature, should burst into so passionate an exclamation of grief as he here does, on an occasion which, though calamitous, was yet accompanied with many alleviating circumstances. Absa-

\* Preached in Queen Anne's, in 1774.

lom, it is true, was his son ; but he was not his only son, and he was moreover so singularly ungracious and undutiful that he might have weaned and alienated the fondest affection : nor does David, though undoubtedly a kind and tender parent, in any other instance appear to have been weakly or capriciously indulgent. No man could possibly make more just and apposite reflections on the death of a beloved child than he had formerly done : and yet, in whatever point of view the expressions in the text are considered, his sorrow seems to have been as unreasonable as it was immoderate.

There must have been some adequate cause for so striking an inconsistency. To trace this cause, and to illustrate an interesting circumstance in sacred history, are the objects of my present discourse. It is such a portion of history as, if well attended to, may not only put parents and children, but governors and subjects, on their guard in several essential articles of duty ; in which, without great caution, both the one and the other are too apt frequently to fail, and, by failing, to be undone.

The second commandment, not more rigorously than justly, threatens *to visit the sins of the fathers upon the children*. And an attentive observer may see a thousand instances in life, in which this threat is actually inflicted on communities, as well as on individuals ; and this not only morally and judicially, but in the natural course of things. It happens also that the denunciation is frequently reversed, when the  
sins



sins of the children are visited upon the fathers. And, in truth, when a parent sees his children *making themselves vile*, and yet will not restrain them, I know not on what grounds he can expect that they should not hereafter *consume his eyes and grieve his heart*.

It would seem to have been in this way that David erred. Absalom was born, emphatically, *a child of wrath*; for his mother, Maachah, the daughter of Talmai king of Geshur, was a captive, whom David had taken in his expedition to Ziglag: she was consequently an alien. It may, however, be presumed, that she was naturalized according to the Jewish ritual, by undergoing the ceremony of having *her head shaven, her nails pared, the raiment of her captivity put from off her*; and by remaining in his house, and bewailing her father and mother a full month. But there is too much reason to believe, that, with regard to the Jewish worship, she was only an "occasional conformist." This, I say, is to be feared, because it is a natural and by no means an unusual case: and if her conversion was thus imperfect, her son (if he had the good fortune to escape being misled by a false religion) can hardly be supposed to have been sufficiently instructed in the true one. For this, much of the blame is to be laid at the door of David: and doubtless he was inexcusable; since, by thus neglecting to lay a proper foundation, on which in after life he might have raised a superstructure of virtue and happiness, he was the true cause of all his son's future misconduct. The sore punishment which  
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this afterwards drew down on his own head, should be a lasting lesson to parents, that whatsoever else they neglect, they do not neglect to *bring up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.*

In point of natural advantages, Absalom was without a rival ; for *in all Israel there was none to be so much praised as Absalom, for his beauty : from the sole of his foot, even to the crown of his head, there was no blemish in him.* There is some ground for suspecting, that these external accomplishments made too great an impression upon the fond parent ; and that, satisfied with them, he was at little pains to cultivate any other. The body, as well as the mind, is capable of improvement from culture ; and it is not the part of wisdom wholly to neglect it : still, however, personal beauty is, and ought to be, of less moment than mental endowments. Happily both may be cultivated together ; and that they should be so, is advantageous, if not necessary, to both. But it has too often been the reproach of mankind, that where Providence has done much for them, they are very apt to do little for themselves. Those who are possessed of many personal graces, are seldom sufficiently solicitous about internal ornaments : great genius is rarely accompanied with intense application : fertile countries are usually the least cultivated ; and the best governments are frequently the worst administered.

David does not appear to have been an exception to the truth of these observations. He was blessed

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with a gift and heritage uncommonly fair and promising. Gratitude to the gracious Giver should have made him more careful not to have suffered it, like the vineyard of the slothful man, to have been *all grown over with thorns and nettles*. Calamities which besal us in the daily course of Providence, and without any fault of our own, are often, God knows, sufficiently poignant: but when we smart through our own misconduct, the anguish of the blow is infinitely more exquisite. When David therefore found a son, who, with proper care, might have been a comfort to him in those seasons of life when comfort is most wanted, become *pricks in his eyes, and a thorn in his side*; and when he reflected on himself as the author of his own sufferings; we are no longer surprised to find his grief was immoderate in the extreme\*.

If, in the present fallen and degenerate state of human nature, we can hardly, with all our skill, rear

\* Ὅποτε τις τῶν ἐκτραφέντων εἰς ἡλικίαν ἰκόμενος, μὴ νέμοι χάριν, μηδ' ἀμύναι τοῖσι τοῖς ἐκτραφέντι· ἀλλὰ που τάναντία κακῶς λεγείν ἢ δῶν τέτοις ἐγχειρίῃ· ὅλῳ ὡς δυσαρρετῶν καὶ προσκοπῶν εἰκός τοὺς ἐνόμους καὶ συνδούλους τὴν γεγενημένην ἐκ τῶν γενησαντῶν ἐπιμέλειαν, καὶ κακοπάθειαν περὶ τὰ τέκνα καὶ τῶν τέλων διαρραπείαν καὶ τροφήν. — Polyb. lib. vi. § 4. p. 632.

“When any of these, therefore, being arrived at perfect age, instead of yielding suitable returns of gratitude and assistance to those by whom they have been bred, on the contrary attempt to injure them by words or actions; it is manifest, that those who behold the wrong, after having also seen the sufferings and the anxious care that were sustained by the parents in the nourishment and education of these children, must be greatly offended, and unhappy at such proceeding.” — Hampton’s Translation, vol. iii. p. 10.

the



the fair plants of true religion and piety to any tolerable perfection, what may we not expect, if, instead of *Paul's planting and Apollos's watering these seeds of goodness*, we suffer *the boar out of the wood to root them out, and the wild beasts of the field to devour them?* Absalom, as has already been hinted, *was shapen in sin, and in iniquity did his mother conceive him.* Instead of correcting this original and native obliquity of mind and propensity to evil, David suffered it to grow as he grew, until at length it became impossible to render that straight which had so long been crooked. And if, from a youth thus trained up, he looked for any other returns than those he met with, he was wilfully blind and self-deceived. And so will every other parent be, who, in a like case, expects the fruits of obedience from the children of disobedience. Admirable are the words of the wise Son of Sirach: *A horse, not broken, becometh headstrong; and a child, left to himself, will be wilful. Cocker thy child, and he shall make thee afraid; play with him, and he shall bring thee to heaviness. Give him no liberty in his youth; and wink not at his follies. Bow down his neck while he is young, and beat him on the sides while he is a child, lest he wax stubborn and disobedient, and so bring sorrow to thine heart.*

And now having shewn why David's grief on occasion of the death of Absalom was more violent than it had been when the child which he had by the wife of Uriah died, or even when Amnon was murdered; and that this excess of grief arose from a consciousness

ness that he himself was ultimately the cause of it; we are naturally led to consider some other circumstances in the history of Absalom; and, in particular, the several steps and stages of that most unnatural defection, which, after deluging his country with blood, terminated in the untimely death of a rebellious son.

The first very conspicuous action of his life, which we read of, was the foul murder of his brother *Amnon*. He had indeed no slight provocation to plead in his excuse: but, uncommissioned as he was to take the execution of justice into his own hands, so violent an invasion of the prerogative of his father shews that he was not only of a vehement and impetuous spirit, but ambitious and fond of power. I might perhaps be suspected of deducing an inference from this story which it's recital will hardly warrant, were I to state, that even now he looked forward to the period in which he hoped to be *made judge in the land*. But this much is certain, that Amnon alone then stood between him and the kingdom: and that the people in general put this construction upon it, may be inferred from the report which was immediately raised, *that Absalom had slain all the king's sons, and that there was not one of them left*. If David's whole character was not composed of instances of great wickednesses, mixed with instances of still greater virtues, we might be surprised how so wise a king could possibly overlook, as he did, so flagrant a violation of all order and good government. We read only, that,

instead

instead of resenting and punishing it, (which he ought to have done both as a good father and a good king,) *he and all his servants wept very sore.* They might indeed well be moved at so sad a symptom of determined and daring undutifulness; since, if he was capable of such an outrage against all decency in early life, what might not be expected when such propensities came to be confirmed by habit? A true regard for Absalom himself, as well as for all the other children of the king, should have urged them to have nipped, if possible, this first shoot of disobedience in the bud. To spare the guilty, is to punish the innocent. Respect to the welfare of his many fast friends, who must necessarily be involved in the calamities that were sure to follow such ill-timed and excessive indulgence, should have taught the too easy monarch more prudence and more firmness. But it has too often been the fatal policy of other men in authority as well as of David, *to love their enemies, and hate their friends*: of which error the smallest part of the punishment is, that, as Joab told David, *they shame the faces of all their servants.* After so indisputable a proof that *foolishness was bound in the heart of Absalom*, David should with his wiser son have known, that the *rod of correction*, seasonably and judiciously applied, *would have driven it far from him.* He did know what the law had decreed against a stubborn and rebellious son: yet he appears to have been as indisposed to have recourse to the law, as he was heedless of the dictates of reason.



It is said, however, that, after this murder, *Absalom fled*: and it may perhaps from hence be inferred, that David so exceedingly repented his crime, that he passed some very rigorous decrees against him. But it is more probable that Absalom only apprehended such steps would be taken, from a consciousness of the just occasion which he had given for them. In the history we find no account of any such proceedings: it mentions only *David's mourning for his son every day*; adding, in a phrase of much force, that *his soul longed to go forth to Absalom*. These were circumstances which as little shewed a vindictive spirit in the king, as any just grounds for the fears of Absalom. If, as is generally imagined, the forty-second Psalm was written on the occasion of this revolt, no farther proof can be wanting to shew that David's greatest anxiety was for the preservation of the national purity of worship at the temple in Jerusalem, from which (as appears from 2 Sam. ch. xv. ver. 14, as well as from the 42d Psalm) he was now cut off; and to which he longed to be restored, even *as the hart panteth for the water-brooks*. So far from meditating schemes of revenge, his *soul was cast down with the waves and billows of adversity* which surrounded him; and he \* *went mourning, because of the oppression of the enemy*.

With *Talmai, the son of Ammibud, king of Gesbur, Absalom tarried three years*. I seem not to myself to deduce more from the history than it will warrant,

\* Psal. xliii. ver. 2.

suppose that under this Heathen prince, who was his grandfather, he learned (or, if he had already learned, that he was now confirmed in) some Gentile notions and maxims ; which, however inconsistent with the system of his own country, were too suitable to his future views for him not to cultivate : for, on his return to Jerusalem, (a measure which was accomplished not without some difficulty,) the first proof which he gave of his improvements was a systematic and well-concerted scheme to overturn the established government. This he hoped to effect entirely by the means of an unhallowed principle, first broached in the schools of Gentilism ; I mean that of a natural, inherent, and unalienable right in the people of any community to erect and to pull down a government as *shall seem right in their own eyes* ; or, in their own phrase, a right to make *a king to judge them like the nations*. This, no doubt, was a doctrine very dissimilar to what he might and ought to have learned from that better code of laws received and revered at Jerusalem. But he saw that, owing to the weakness and wickedness of mankind, the flattering idea that all power flowed from the people would everywhere find advocates, and everywhere be popular. Indeed, in his case, there seemed to be a necessity that such opinions should prevail, before he could accomplish his views : what his sentiments on the subject might have been, if he had succeeded, is another enquiry. It certainly is not likely, however, that, even if these levelling principles had raised him to the

throne, he would afterwards have been so zealous in defence of them : such doctrines appear to be as ill adapted to support a government, as they are well calculated to overturn one.

To so profligate a character forgiveness for past offences, and licence to disseminate his pernicious principles, were the best earnest of future success : David not only pardoned him for his former crimes, but received him again into favour. Elated with his success in this his first essay of disobedience, he now seriously betook himself to prosecute his long meditated revolt. His first attempts, as it was natural, were covert and secret, and accompanied with the most unqualified and unbounded professions of an entire devotion to the king. Nay, when in the wild phrensy of his ambition he even set fire to a *barley field* belonging to Joab, he had the assurance and the art to alledge that it was from the regard he bore to the king, and from the strong desire he had to *see the king's face* ; from a confidence, as he insinuated, of his being able to prove, notwithstanding all that had passed, that there was *no iniquity in him*.

Ripening fast as the plot now was, it became time for David's hoary counsellor, Ahitophel, who no doubt had long secretly fomented it, openly to avow himself. The character of this man is remarkable : *the counsel of Ahitophel, which he counselled in those days, was as if a man had inquired at the oracle of God ; so was all the counsel of Ahitophel both with David and with Absalom*. Under his auspices, those commotions which  
had



had hitherto assumed the gentler semblance of reform, now appeared in their genuine character of revolt and rebellion. And in truth it required a head like his to devise the singular stratagem of *sending spies throughout all the tribes of Israel*, with instructions, that as soon as they should *hear the sound of the trumpet*, they should say, *Absalom reigneth in Hebron!* The policy of this measure is obvious : and this is neither the first nor the last time that mankind have been hurried on to join in desperate enterprises, by being artfully beguiled into the belief that they were already accomplished. Thus, in Monmouth's rebellion in the last century, (an event which was almost an exact counterpart \* to this of Absalom,) soon after his landing, it was judged necessary that he should be proclaimed king. And Richard duke of York, who took up arms against king Henry the Sixth, gave out to the world, that he and his adherents "designed all honour and obedience unto the king, and meant only to remove certain ill men from about his person, who oppressed the people

\* Though, on his landing at Lime in Dorsetshire, he had scarcely a hundred followers ; yet, "so captivating was his person" (says Ralph) "to the people, and so specious his pretensions, that, the next and the following days, such numbers crowded in to him, that his commissaries had full employment in taking down their names and supplying them with arms." Monmouth's pretence also was to repress tyrannies and usurpation. Of the multitudes that flocked to him, "the greatest part," as Hume remarks, "*were the lowest of the people* ; and his declaration was chiefly calculated to suit the prejudices of the vulgar, or the most bigoted of the Whig-party."

“and made a prey of the public.” Hitherto a few nameless malecontents only (such as are always to be found in all communities) had flocked to the standard of Absalom: and even they had *gone out in their simplicity, and knew not any thing*; neither whom they were to oppose, nor for what they were contending. But, owing to the device just mentioned, he soon found means, like the unbelieving Jews of Thessalonica, to attach to himself *certain \* lewd fellows of the baser sort*; and gathered a company, and set all the city in an uproar; perverting the nation; forbidding to give tribute to Cæsar, and saying that he himself was a king. And this is no uncommon stratagem with the *pestilent fellows and movers of sedition* in the world, to report that to have already happened, which they only wish may happen. It appears, at least in the present instance, to have succeeded with the *tribes of Israel*: for the conspiracy now became strong, and the people increased continually for Absalom †.

When once a multitude is tumultuously collected, there is no saying to what a pitch of mischief they may easily be led. It matters not that, as individuals, they are mild, beneficent, and humane: I

\* — “omnium flagitiosorum atque facinorosorum circum se tanquam stipatorum, catervas habebat.”——Sall. Bell. Catalin.

† In a secession made by the people at Rome, and mentioned by Dionys. Halicarnass. lib. vii. p. 148 of Spelman's Translation:—“Those who were easiest in their fortunes joined the Patricians, “ whilst their servants joined the Plebeians.”

I presume, this has always been, and always will be, the case in all insurrections: it certainly was the case in the American revolt.

would not trust the milkieſt man upon earth, when he is one in a diſorderly and riotous crowd. It matters not that in our individual capacities we are wiſe, temperate, and juſt : collected together in a mob, we inevitably become irrational, violent, and tyrannical. A large body of men drawn together may not unaptly be compared to certain chemical preparations, which, in their ſeparate ſtate, are perfectly innoxious ; but, by being united, are rendered inflammable, and even poiſonous. Mankind have ſeldom been aſſembled in great numbers for any uſeful purpoſe : whenever we ſee a vaſt multitude, we may well exclaim, with Jacob, *O my ſoul ! come not thou into their ſecret ; unto their aſſembly mine honour be not thou united.* It is not improbable, that *many of the people*, whom Pilate called together to the trial of our Saviour, had, before that took place, ſincerely believed that *a great Prophet had ariſen.* But no ſooner were they aſſembled in the prætorium than *all the people* (in the full eſt ſenſe of that emphatical phraſe) cried out, *Crucify him, crucify him !*

Absalom was now no longer a novice in the management of popular meetings : we may ſuppoſe he kept the paſſions of his followers conſtantly heated by haranguing perpetually on the abuſes of government, as factious men always find it eaſy to do : we may alſo ſuppoſe that he blackened, by every artifice in his power, the character of his good father, the king ; ſometimes, it may be, deſclaiming on his adultery with Bathſheba, and the



murder of Uriah; and sometimes on his pardoning Amnon for an incestuous rape: and while he thus dwelt with unnatural satisfaction on the dark side of the picture, it is little likely that he should see (or, if he did see, that he should have the candour and the justice to advert to) it's brighter parts. In vain had David hoped to atone for past errors by future penitence and piety; nor does it appear to have been regarded, if it was even thought of by Absalom and his adherents, that in the general tenour of his conduct he had shewn himself a good king and a pious man. It was, no doubt, in the power of this ungracious son to bring many just charges against his father: but if, along with such as were just, he forbore to alledge many that were imaginary, his conduct in this instance was by no means consistent with the rest of his character, and very unlike the part which rebels usually take upon such occasions. In this temper, and with these views, it is scarcely possible that he should omit to arraign his parent for a supposed predilection for Solomon; who, because he was a true Israelite by both lines of descent, might therefore be suspected of being more in favour with the king, as well as with God: and because he himself had hitherto been treated with an indulgence and kindness confessedly beyond his deservings, he might perhaps be apprehensive that he should hereafter be treated with a proportionable rigour and severity. In the wide field of possibility, it certainly was not impossible that his father might abuse his power; we may therefore

therefore suppose it to have been *resolved*, that he would so abuse it : a pretence that may seem to justify objections and resistance against any authority in the world.

That Absalom, who, like the *wicked* as described by the Psalmist, was *estranged from the womb, and went astray as soon as he was born* †, should wish to excite a rebellion, unnatural as it was, might have been expected ; but that he should find such multitudes ready to abet and support him, is not so easily to be accounted for : multitudes, who not only were happy under the established government, but who till then had thought themselves so ; and whose interest, as well as duty, it was, to preserve their allegiance unshaken. It can be accounted for only by reflecting, that, in every country, the ignorant are more numerous than the wise : mistakes in judgment therefore, and great errors in conduct, are too naturally to be expected from the many. This proves that the *resolves*, even of large majorities of the people, are always to be received with great caution : it never can be on the determinations of *a multitude of such counsellors* that the safety of the State depends. Providence, never intending (or at least not approving) that ignorance should prescribe laws or dictate to knowledge, has in part provided against this evil, by disposing the uninformed to receive instruction, and the more enlightened to impart it. While this na-

\* Psal. lviii. ver. 3.

tural subordination subsists, and wisdom united to integrity presides, a community possesses all the strength and security of which the regular course of things admits ; but vice, either in the governors or the governed, inverts this order. The rulers, instead of dictating sound knowledge, may deceive and mislead ; or the people, instead of listening to wholesome advice, may *despise dominion* : and when either of these evils takes place, (that is, when either vice presides, or ignorance refuses to listen,) then the State has no choice but of ruin and desolation.

The ends proposed by the various insurgents who now enlisted under Absalom's banner were doubtless, like those of all other insurgents, as various as the various passions, opinions, abilities, and interests of the parties concerned. It is most likely indeed that they all agreed in one pretence ; but very improbable that they were all influenced by the same motives. The bulk of every sect and party, into which mankind are divided, are those who think only as they are bid to think, and act as they are acted upon : of course there must always be a material difference in the motives of those who lead and those who follow. Both have some scheme in view ; some end, which, though dissimilar, they pursue by means apparently the same. The designs of those who set and keep the machine in motion are in general sufficiently obvious ; but not so those of that larger portion of our kind, whose humbler lot it is to be directed by others. They are amused, bewildered,



and enflamed, by certain words and sounds of almost magical potency, to attempt the reformation of some imaginary abuses, of which never having felt the grievance, it is hardly possible they should have any distinct conception of their nature. In Absalom's time, the pretence was his supposed superior capacity for government ; in ours, it is an undefinable something, which we call *Liberty*. And it still is the hard fate of unthinking multitudes to be driven on to vote it necessary to shake off a yoke, the weight of which they feel not, nor have ever felt, oppressive ; and to change their old masters, without well considering who are to be their new ones. For, it is very rare to find any people, collectively, considerate and rational ; and still more rare to find them moderate : their ideas are vague and indeterminate, and their tempers unavoidably heated and enflamed. Naturally prone to change, the prevailing object of the many, in all public commotions, is only that the changes which they have meditated may take place, and that they may succeed in their projects of innovation. To this single point all their efforts are directed ; and thus they are contented, for the present, to forge chains for themselves, and to leave it to chance and future circumstances to determine who shall rivet them.

Absalom's conduct on this memorable occasion was no doubt as unnatural as that of his followers was absurd. Still, however, it was not without a precedent and a parallel. Men bent on exciting popular discontents have in all ages and countries taken  
pretty

pretty nearly the same steps that Absalom now adopted : and they have seldom failed to find numbers equally ready, *in their simplicity*, to abet them. But it certainly is extraordinary that David, who, in the words of the woman of Tekoah, *was as an angel of God to discern good and bad*, could see so dark a cloud gathering around him, and threatening to burst every instant on his head, and yet take no effectual precautions to guard against it. When a *messenger* came to him, *saying, the hearts of the men of Israel are after Absalom!*—instead of trying to check in time so alarming an insurrection, by a vigorous exertion of those powers which the laws had vested in him, and which the zeal of many of his faithful adherents would have put into his hands (for many did profess their willingness to *do whatever the king should appoint*), all the concern he expressed was, that the *young man should be gently dealt with* \*. This “sweet grace of mercy,” thus miserably misapplied, became almost a vice ; for it would be difficult to mention an exertion of power, even the most arbitrary, that could have been productive of more mischievous consequences. It is perhaps still more difficult to account for the answer which the king soon after gave to *Ittai the Gittite*, This man was a *stranger and an exile*, and of course under peculiar temptations to join in the revolt : yet so far was he from forgetting his duty, that even when the king himself advised him to abandon his

\* “Consultus super eo Tiberius aspernatus est judicium ; aluitque dubitatione bellum.”——Tacit. Annal. lib. iii. § 41,

forlorn cause, and to return to his place, he resolutely answered: *As the Lord liveth, and as my lord the king liveth, surely in what place my lord the king shall be, whether in death or life, there will also thy servant be.* And he was as good as his word: for, when the king passed over the brook Kedron, and all the country wept, this firm loyalist, with his chosen band of faithful followers, also passed over; determined to abide by the king, and Abiathar and Zadok, and the ark of the covenant of God. It appears from the eleventh Psalm, that some of the king's counsellors, either through fear or treachery, advised him to desert and leave to themselves both *Ittai* and all his adherents, whose ill-judged or interested zeal, they said, seemed likely to involve him in still greater difficulties. But was such a man to be given up, or doomed to flee as a bird to the mountains? or (what was worse) to be left in the power of those wicked men, whose tender mercies are cruel? Let any, but such men as are capable of giving such advice, answer the question. Matters were now fast approaching to a crisis. The rebellion was already at a very dangerous height; and this, as far as we can judge, was owing not so much to the good management of Absalom and his party (whose abilities, however, on such an occasion, we are far from questioning), as to the bad management of David. Thinking it impossible, it would seem, that a son could be a rebel, it was hard to prevail on him to oppose force to force. At length, however, he was persuaded; and the first step he took



took was certainly proper and judicious ; I mean his having recourse to fasting and prayer. This is always right ; but it was particularly so in the present juncture, as it might seem in some sort to sanctify the very prudent though somewhat irregular expedient he next fell upon, namely, the sending Hushai the Archite, under false pretences, to insinuate himself into Absalom's confidence, that, thus being admitted to his counsels, he might the more easily defeat them\*.

The address of this trusty servant on this hazardous adventure was admirable. On his first approach to the usurper, he hails him with the common salutation, *God save the king!* Commentators have remarked that there is a very ingenious equivocation in this phrase, as it is here used. It certainly was intended to be understood as applied to the person to whom it was addressed : and yet, by a mental reservation, it might also be predicated of David, who alone, no

\* In Lord Bacon's History of Henry VIIth there is related an expedient of accomplishing a good end by bad means, not unlike this mentioned in the text. When the Earl of Suffolk fled into Flanders to promote an insurrection against Henry the Seventh, he caused Sir Robert Curson, captain of the castle at Hammer, to fly from his charge, and to feign himself the Earl's servant. Curson did so ; and having insinuated himself into the secrets of the Earl, and become his confidant, communicated every thing to Henry. Meanwhile Henry, to confirm the credit of Curson, caused to be published at Paul's Cross the Pope's bull of excommunication and curse against the Earl of Suffolk and Sir Robert Curson : "where-  
"in," says the noble relater, "it must be confessed that heaven was  
"made too much to bow to earth, and religion to policy."

doubt,

doubt, *was king*. Be this as it may, it appears not at once effectually to have lulled asleep all the just suspicions of Absalom, whom we may suppose to have now become an adept in all the wiles of plots and conspiracies. *Is this*, says he to the adroit courtier, *is this thy kindness to thy friend?* As though he had said, if it be thus that thou servest my father, who has a better title to thy services than I can pretend to, what security can I have that thou wilt be more faithful to me? It was an home-question; but *Hushai* was prepared for it, and therefore readily answered, *no, but whom the Lord and this people shall choose, his will I be*. If the suspicion of a quibble was before fairly fastened on this dextrous manager of a pious fraud, he will not easily escape it in the instance now before us. *The Lord and the people* had chosen, and could choose, David only. Nevertheless, framed and applied as the answer was, it might and it did convey to Absalom the idea that *Hushai* had also adopted the new-fangled notions concerning the power of the people.

That the answer was ingenious and plausible is admitted: yet, had it been critically examined, it is believed Absalom might have found as much cause of dissatisfaction as satisfaction in it; for he could not pretend to a better right to the throne than David had. Admitting, then, that the sense of this answer was that which he put upon it, and that the general suffrages of the people could absolve an individual conscientious subject from his allegiance; that

Hushai

Hushai was so absolved, and all others who chose it; and that, in short, David was now deposed, and Absalom made king in his stead: did it never occur to him to ask himself this plain question, what was to hinder a giddy populace, when the tide should turn, from again acting the same part and deposing him? He appears not to have foreseen, or at least not to have regarded, that, instead of permanence and stability, the two main objects in all good governments, he was now laying a foundation, in the very principles on which his new empire was to be raised, for perpetual convulsions and revolutions, than which his bitterest enemies could not well have wished him a greater evil.

*God's ways are not as our ways.* It is his peculiar privilege to bring good out of evil; and, *as snow and vapour, storm and wind, fulfil his word,* so doth he ordain, that the most untoward events in human life shall, if he see fit, *work together for good.* The midwives of Egypt, a harlot of Jericho, a lying prophet, a woman of Bahurim, or an artful courtier, were all but so many instruments in his hands to bring about good in the moral world; just as thunder and lightning effect the same salutary purposes in the natural. *He who giveth salvation unto kings, and sheweth mercy to his anointed,* loveth some times, by means apparently the most contemptible, to *confound the wisdom of the wise.* If Absalom had not been infatuated, or (as I should rather have said) *if the Lord had not appointed to defeat the good counsel of Abitophel,*



to the intent that he might bring evil upon Absalom, he could never have thought the counsel of Hushai to be better than the counsel of Abitophel.

That there was much good sense and sound judgment in Hushai's advice, as well as infinite address and delicacy in his mode of delivering it, is allowed. Attend for a moment to both. He differs from Abitophel with diffidence, whilst yet, with apparent hesitation, he suggests some very natural grounds of fear, which he knew would not fail to make their due impression on the mind of Absalom, notwithstanding all Abitophel's endeavours to encourage and animate him. He is reminded not only of David's own well-known prowess and skill in war, but also of the innate and distinguished valour of his *mighty men*. This is backed by a very significant insinuation of another kind; which however, for obvious reasons, is but just hinted at. Thy followers, says he, though now *valiant as a lion*, (thus artfully by a well-turned compliment paving the way for the disheartening surmises which follow,) yet on the first rebuff their *hearts shall utterly melt*. No rebel, he would say, however naturally brave, and when engaged in a good cause, can be so undaunted as those who are enlisted in the honourable service of their *king and country* \*.

And now nothing remains but the last decisive

\* "The king's name is a tower of strength,

"Which they upon the adverse faction want."

Shakespeare, Rich. III. Act v. Scene 3.

blow, which is to determine the fate of the kingdom of Israel. The two armies meet ; and this battle of friends, countrymen, and brothers, was fought *in the wood of Ephraim*. Of Absalom's party twenty thousand were slain, and their defeat was final. But, as it were to intimate that David's backwardness to chastise this undutiful son and his misguided followers continued to the last, it is added (and is certainly a fine stroke of humanity) *that the wood devoured more people that day than the sword devoured*.

The issue of this desperate revolt, with respect to Absalom, was as extraordinary as all the rest of it had been. *He rode upon a mule ; and the mule went under the thick boughs of a great oak, and his head caught hold of the oak, and he was taken up between the heaven and the earth, and the mule that was under him went away*. Thus suspended, Joab took three darts in his hand, and thrust them through the heart of Absalom, while he was alive in the midst of the oak\*.

\* It has been remarked, that Providence inflicted a kind of death on this traitorous young man, not very dissimilar to that, to which the laws of England sentence such malefactors. "The traitor shall be drawn to the place of execution, as not being worthy any more to tread the face of the earth, whereof he was made ; and with his head declining downwards, and as near the ground as may be, being thought unfit to take the benefit of the common air. He shall next *be hanged up* by the neck between *heaven and earth*, as deemed unworthy of both or either ; as likewise that the eyes of men may behold and their hearts condemn him."

"And

“And so perish” (as the excellent Bishop Hall concludes his Contemplations on the History) “all they who dare to lift up their hands against the LORD’S Anointed!—but on himself let his crown flourish!”



## DISCOURSE X.

## ON THE CHARACTER OF AHITOPHEL\*.

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2 SAMUEL, ch. xvii. ver. 23.

*And when Ahitophel saw that his counsel was not followed, he saddled his ass, and arose, and gat him home to his house, and put his household in order, and hanged himself, and died, and was buried in the sepulchre of his father.*

I AM not without apprehensions that I have hardly read my text without giving offence. The times in which we live are in many respects greatly altered; even the duties of the pulpit are no longer what they were but a very few years ago. As though we became preachers that we might be instructed, rather than instruct; there are few of our hearers who do not conceive themselves authorised to inform us, both what we ought to preach, and what we ought not. If those persons in this congregation, who are thus suddenly become acute critics, had been as careful to be exact hearers, it would not have been necessary

(\* Preached in Queen Anne's, in 1774.)

for me now again thus publicly to charge with misrepresentation some reports which have been industriously circulated respecting my last Sermon. I believe it was owing to the frequent occurrence of cases of this kind, soon after the Reformation, that the Clergy of those times thought it prudent to deliver written Sermons: a custom which is almost peculiar to the Church of England. Positions, opinions, and doctrines, were then, as now, imputed to them; which they were conscious they had never advanced. On the clearness and certainty of a written testimony, as far at least as the fact of what was or was not advanced, there could be no dispute.

I have, on many accounts, reason to be thankful that this custom has never been discontinued in our Church. Several of the remarks and sentiments, which I lately delivered to you in a Discourse upon the same subject as the one which I have now prepared, have been so exceedingly distorted and misrepresented, yet still with such an ingenious attention to what undoubtedly was said, that, but for my notes, I should have been at a loss how to disavow them; and yet not to have disavowed them, would have been to submit to imputations of such folly and dissimulation as I would not impute even to my accusers.

It is by no means a circumstance that gives me pleasure, to find myself obliged so frequently to speak to you of myself. But whenever I have thus yielded to necessity, I flatter myself that the motive has ap-

peared to you not less urgent than obvious. Egotism does not consist merely in the use of the monosyllable "I:" it may be difficult, but it is not impossible, for a man to speak of himself (as of any other person or thing) without either vanity or ostentation: we deserve censure only when we bring ourselves forward unnecessarily, or improperly. The character of a minister of the word of God is not a mere personal concern: he owes it to the flock over whom he is appointed, to preserve, not only himself, but his character also, *unspotted from the world*: to repel a personal slander is in him more than a common duty; because the refutation is necessary, not only to his own welfare, but to the success of his ministry.

Suffer me, then, after this fair appeal to yourselves that I have been much wronged by some very confident reports respecting my last Discourse, (which also I can farther prove by a reference to the manuscript still in my possession)—suffer me, I say, to go on, and both now and hereafter, undismayed by censurers, (whose threats are, I hope, as impotent as they themselves are unjust,) to deliver to you such doctrines and exhortations as the exigencies of the times and your particular circumstances may seem to require.

Ahitophel, the subject of my text, acted a busy and important part in Absalom's revolt: and if there was a propriety, as I must still be permitted to think there was, in holding up Absalom as a mirror to those of us, who (like him) may be in danger of being led into rebellion, while we suppose we are engaged only in

a vir-



a virtuous opposition, it cannot be improper to inquire somewhat more particularly who Ahitophel was, and what he did ; that our Leaders also may see what they have to expect if they, like him, proceed to drive matters to extremities.

Of Ahitophel's parentage we have no account. It would seem, however, that he was not of *the lowest of the people* ; because the first mention made of him is, that he was *the king's counsellor* : and in the 55th Psalm (which is generally supposed to have been written on occasion of the defection of Ahitophel) David calls him *his companion, his guide, and his familiar friend*. The king probably thought, that, by such endearing favours, he had laid him under particular obligations to be loyal at least, and faithful, even though he had failed in engaging his gratitude and affection : but, when he indulged such hopes, it seems not to have been attended to, as it ought, that Ahitophel was a consummate politician. As such it was natural, perhaps, that his attachment to his king should be founded only on his interest ; and when occasions arose to make it his interest to form other attachments, there were no counter-motives to restrain him. He was a true *Gilonite* : he had seen various revolutions in the State : he had seen the government descend from *Saul* to *Ishbosheth*, and from *Ishbosheth* to *David* : and in every revolution no doubt so politic a man would choose his side, not as duty but as interest prompted him. His experience in State-craft was answerable to his native subtlety : for,

perfectly acquainted as he was with the intrigues, the cabals, and the factions, not only of Israel, but of the neighbouring countries, he soon engaged in his confederation *Gebal, and Ammon, and Amalek, the Philistines, and them that dwell at Tyre*; attaching and uniting to him those who till then had never agreed with one another.

What the motives were, which first tempted Ahitophel to this foul defection, we are not directly told : but they may perhaps be collected from the history. Bathsheba was his grand-daughter ; being the daughter of his son Elias. It is then by no means a far-fetched conjecture, to suppose that he resented the great wrong done to so near a relation by David, which he waited but for a convenient opportunity to revenge. Few passions take a stronger hold on the human mind than a concealed purpose of revenge. This, like a smothered fire, bursts out at length with a fiercer flame for having been awhile suppressed.

Of this resentful and vindictive temper Ahitophel appears to have been ; and, unfortunately for his country, he had abilities to accomplish any projects of mischief, which the malice of his heart prompted him to meditate. In this instance, however, the extreme intemperance of his passions appears to have weakened his judgment : for, with all his abilities, he certainly was blind to his own interest. Independent of the compunctions of conscience, it would have been prudent in him not to have swerved from his allegiance. A revolt, which was to be conducted by  
a man

a man so fickle and unsteady as Absalom was, and against so wise and good a king as David, could not but be extremely hazardous. It is true he knew the young man to be brave and enterprizing, and infinitely beloved by the people; who, no doubt, are always of the greatest weight in all violent revolutions. But then (which more than counterbalanced a few circumstances favourable to the revolt) there appeared to be every thing to fear from Absalom's levity, insincerity, and extreme looseness of principle. Against these discouragements, however, it is not improbable, Ahitophel might set the untoward circumstances of the country, and the degenerate character of the people: for, from the eagerness with which men flocked to the standard of rebellion, it is fair to infer, that the minds of the people were very generally unsettled and ill-disposed towards the government. Israel might then be circumstanced as we now are, when an evil spirit of discontent, clamour, and refractoriness, seems to have gone forth among us; disposing us to object to, and quarrel with, every thing that has been long established.

Nothing is more common than for a free people, in times of heat and violence, to gratify momentary passions, by admitting into their theories of government such principles and precedents as may afterwards prove fatal to themselves. Of this kind, in my estimation, are the present *resolves* of our *committees*, *conventions*, and *congresses*; passed not only without the authority of any law, but in direct opposition to the



known and established laws of the land. The injustice of such conduct is not more manifest than it's bad policy and danger \*. For, it is giving up all the comfort and security of fixed law to the caprice and humour of multitudes and mobs: and it should weigh little with us that such irregularities are said to be exercised only against the enemies of our country. This argument, if admitted, and carried on to it's full extent, would be utterly subversive of all government, and make every man his own judge and law-giver. For, how is it to be ascertained who these enemies of our country are? If we are to account those to be such who are declared to be of that description by a committee or convention of to-day, how do we know but that those very persons now called enemies may to-morrow be voted, or vote themselves, a committee or convention; and, in their turn, denounce *their* enemies as the enemies of their country? Thus are we (under the prevalence of such principles) to be ruled, not by equal and equitable laws, but by the capricious resolves, and passionate opinions, of a self-created junto. Let no one therefore now set an example, which may hereafter

\* "The Legislature is the supreme power of the commonwealth; and no edict of any body else, in what form soever conceived, or by what power soever backed, can have the force and obligation of a law, which has not it's sanction from the Legislature which the Public has chosen and appointed; and no obedience is due, but ultimately to the supreme authority, which is the Legislature."——  
Locke.

be cited and followed, to his own ruin; when he himself may in vain invoke that justice, which at present he denies to others. The time may come, when those who now endeavour to check the progress of political opinion by pains and penalties, by fines and by imprisonment, may, if this state of anarchy (for I cannot call it establishment) continues, themselves be fined, proscribed, or even put to death.

If, instead of submitting public questions to the public decisions of a Constitutional Legislature, we suffer them to be determined by the private prejudices of unauthorised individuals combined in cabals, we must necessarily unhinge the present regular state of things, and substitute a dominion of parties: and as long as particular resentments, and individual schemes of revenge, or even the success of some favourite individual project of reformation, shall induce men to disregard the settled Constitution, so long is just government set at nought, and anarchy or tyranny introduced in its stead. The most sacred rights, no longer fenced by the laws, become the sport of every vicissitude or change in a party: there is no more any established rule of conduct; every thing is thrown into uncertainty, and fluctuates with the alternate prevalency of contending factions.

As far as it is possible to collect the real purpose of those self-delegated persons, who have taken upon themselves now to be our Leaders in politics, from their apparently discordant practices, we are, for fear of surrendering our liberties to (what we call) the arbitrary

bitrary pretensions of a British Parliament, now to entrust them to men, or bodies of men, invested with no legal authority : men like ourselves, who have no more right to make laws for us, than we have to make laws for them. It may, I believe, be laid down as a sound maxim in politics, that it is better even to be oppressed and injured by a lawful power, than to receive benefit and protection from usurpers ; and he is no friend to the peace of mankind, who, to suit a present purpose, encourages a contrary opinion. I love not to suspect any men ; but I still less love to trust men, who have been first known as public characters and as patriots since these commotions, with any such power as the Constitution has not given them ; with any such power, I might have said, as must in the end do harm, though in our present emergency it is possible that it may produce some good\*.—To return from this digression, which however

\* I have somewhere met with a speech, said to have been spoken in the House of Commons concerning the other House, March 1659, which has some ludicrous but strong remarks, not inapposite to our present subject.

“ And now, Mr. Speaker, have we not gloriously vindicated the  
 “ Nation’s liberty ? Have we not worthily employed our blood and  
 “ treasure, to abolish that power that was set over us by the law,  
 “ to have the same imposed upon us without a law ? And after all  
 “ that *sound and noise* we have made in the world, of the people’s  
 “ legislative power, and of the supremacy and omnipotency of their  
 “ representatives, we now see there is no more power left them  
 “ but what is put in the balance, and equalled by the power of a  
 “ few retainers of tyranny, who are so far from being the people’s  
 “ choice,



ever seemed so naturally to arise from the subject that I do not hesitate to confess it was for the sake of digressions of this sort that the subject was chosen; indeed the having an opportunity to introduce such remarks, and to make such applications, is the chief recommendation to me of these Scripture parallels.

A fitter subject than Absalom, for a deep designing man to work upon, could not well have been found. He was active and enterprising, and possessed of many plausible and popular talents. Unmindful of the infinite obligations he lay under to an indulgent parent; unmindful of the still stronger ties of duty, by which he was bound both as a son and subject; unmindful of his good father's maxim, that *no man could stretch forth his hand against the Lord's anointed, and be guiltless*; he too easily listened to the suggestions of those who pointed out to him the slippery paths of popularity. Thus beset with fallacies, and borne down by importunities, and perhaps also absurdly ashamed to make use of his understanding when he was called upon to exert his courage, he suffered himself to be dictated to by those whom he vainly hoped to govern. Accordingly he instantly and earnestly set himself *to steal away the hearts of the men of Israel*. The means he made use

“choice, that the most part of them are only known to the nation  
“by the mischiefs and villanies they have committed in it.”——  
Printed in “An Account of the Sufferings of William Houlbrook,  
“blacksmith, of Marlborough, in the reign of King Charles the  
“First.”

of for this purpose were no other than such as have ever since been practised by every other man employed in the same service of laying crowns and sceptres in the dust. He inveighed bitterly against the established Government; and though he could not but know, as well as all Israel, that *David executed judgment and justice to all his people*, he yet insinuated, that *judgment was turned into gall, and the fruit of righteousness into hemlock*: and, as though it had not been enough to poison the minds of the people with these general prejudices against his father's government, he affected to descend to particulars \*. Taking advantage, it may be, of some real or supposed grievances, with (as I can easily suppose) the most elaborate professions of his own disinterestedness and entire devotion to the good of the people, he pretended that, when those grievances had been fairly stated, and repeatedly presented, though *their matters were right, yet no man was deputed of the king to bear them*.

That by such means he rendered (if indeed he did not find) the people very generally favourable to his purpose of revolting, will be matter of surprise to no one who is well acquainted with human nature. Few things are easier than to excite popular discontents. "He that goeth about" (says the judicious

\* "Some truth there was, but dash'd and brew'd with lies

"To please the fools, and puzzle all the wise."

Hooker) “ to persuade a multitude that they are not  
 “ so well governed as they ought to be, shall never  
 “ want favourable and attentive hearers, because they  
 “ know the manifold defects whereunto every kind  
 “ of regiment is subject; but the secret lets and  
 “ difficulties, which in public proceedings are in-  
 “ numerable and inevitable, they have not ordinarily  
 “ the judgment to consider: and because such as  
 “ openly reprove supposed disorders of State are taken  
 “ for principal friends to the common benefit of all,  
 “ and for men that carry singular freedom of mind.  
 “ Under this fair and plausible colour, whatsoever they  
 “ utter passeth for good and current: that which  
 “ wanteth in the weight of their speech, is supplied  
 “ by the aptness of men’s minds to accept and believe  
 “ it. Whereas, on the other side, if we maintain  
 “ things that are established, we have not only to  
 “ strive with a number of heavy prejudices deeply  
 “ rooted in the hearts of men, who think that herein  
 “ we serve the time, and speak in favour of the pre-  
 “ sent State, because thereby we either seek or hold  
 “ preferment; but also to hear such exceptions as  
 “ minds so averted beforehand usually take against that  
 “ which they are loth should be poured into them.”

Mankind ought to consider how impossible it is  
 that they should ever be easy and happy under any  
 system, if they have not strength of mind, candour,  
 and Christian charity sufficient to forbear putting bad  
 interpretations upon the acts of Government, even on  
 such as may have an equivocal or suspicious appear-  
 ance.



ance. This very common propensity, *to think evil of dignities*, has in it as little candour and charity as it has good sense and sound policy : for, *Charity thinketh no evil ; rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth ; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.* And it is of moment to recollect, that this memorable recommendation of *charity* is by no means addressed to mankind only in their private capacities : it is, in an especial manner, to be extended to the public ; because there it is most wanted ; because persons in public stations are most likely to be misrepresented ; and because, also, misrepresentation is, in such a case, of the greatest consequence. Both as Men and as Christians, therefore, it is our duty to abstain from putting ill constructions upon public measures, of which it rarely happens that we are competent judges ; and also, as far as we are able, to prevent such perverseness in others. Even in the worst appearances, Charity will find something to incline her to hope and believe better than some interpret, or than all perhaps may apprehend. For, reason as well as religion, which alone is the legitimate parent of the enlarged charity I now recommend, should remind us, that, let things appear to be, or really be, ever so bad, still God rules over all ; and we may well be contented that he should continue to govern. This consideration of the superintendence of God may not only still all the fearful risings in our own minds, but enable us also to put to silence all the refractory forebodings of others.

To bring these considerations home to ourselves, allowances should be made for the difficulty of governing a people, even in the most advantageous circumstances, under so free a Constitution as ours. But when to these general difficulties are added those arising from so large a proportion of the community being placed far from the eye of Government, and under many peculiar temptations to object to, to resist, and to refuse obedience to it's ordinances, we may well exclaim with the wise man, *Who is able to govern this thy so great a people?* Laws and regulations adapted to the various interests of so extended and dispersed a community, must unavoidably be sometimes unequal. What is necessary and proper for the North or East, may be unnecessary and improper for the South and the West.

In the present circumstances of our Constitution, it is, moreover, not sufficient that laws be really good and wholesome: they must also be approved of, and please those who are to be ruled by them \*. Still, however,

\* “ On the scheme of this barbarous philosophy, which is the  
 “ offspring of cold hearts and muddy understandings, and which is as  
 “ void of solid wisdom as it is destitute of all taste and elegance, laws  
 “ are to be supported only by their own terrors, and by the concern  
 “ which each individual may find in them from his own private  
 “ speculations, or can spare to them from his own private interests.  
 “ In the groves of their academy, at the end of every villo you  
 “ see nothing but the gallows. Nothing is left which engages  
 “ the affections on the part of the commonwealth. On the  
 “ principles of this mechanic philosophy, our institutions can never  
 “ be

however, laws must be made with a general as well as with a particular view; and with an eye to the common good: but it is scarcely possible that a law should, in all cases, be beneficial for all, without bearing hard upon some individuals. And who knows not, how few there are of such enlarged sentiments and comprehensive judgments, as willingly and without a murmur to give up a private profit even for a public advantage? Besides, in every society there always have been, and too probably there always will be, men of restless and ambitious minds; who are never long satisfied with any system of government, or with any administration; because it is hardly possible for any government, or for any administration, to distinguish with their favours every man who may conceive himself to be entitled to distinction; and because also it is the interest and the duty of all governments, and of all administrations, to prevent, if possible, changes and revolutions; the effecting of

“be embodied, if I may use the expression, in persons; so as to  
 “create in us love, veneration, admiration, or attachment. But  
 “that sort of reason which banishes the affections is incapable of  
 “filling their place. These public affections, combined with  
 “manners, are required sometimes as supplements, sometimes as  
 “correctives, always as aids to law. The precept given by a wise  
 “man, as well as a great critic, for the construction of poems, is  
 “equally true as to States—*‘Non satis est pulchra esse poemata, dulcia  
 “sunt.’* There ought to be a system of manners, in every nation,  
 “which a well-formed mind would be disposed to relish. To make  
 “us love our country, our country ought to be lovely.”—Mr.  
 Burke’s Reflections on the Revolution in France, p. 115.

which



which is usually the chief object which malecontents have in view.

It is certain no satisfactory evidence has yet been produced, to prove that the injuries we have received from our Parent State are so great as they are represented to be; much less that her intentions towards us are so unfriendly and hostile as her and our enemies wish us to believe they are. Charges of such moment should neither be hastily asserted, nor hastily credited. That some of the measures of the British Parliament have been injudicious, and perhaps injurious, it's staunchest friends will not be so hardy as to deny: but we have been taught to magnify their errors, and to exaggerate our wrongs; and to seek redress, not as heretofore by petitioning and remonstrating, but by resisting and rebelling. No government on earth is infallible. Perfection is not in human nature; and should no more be expected from aggregate bodies, than from individuals. When, therefore, it shall appear that the Parliament hath either mistaken, or opposed the true interests of the Colonists, let it, I pray you, in common candour, be attributed to the common failings of our common nature. To infer, that, because they have once done wrong, they will always do wrong, is to contradict the plainest principles of reasoning, by which mankind are usually guided in other instances. This is not the first time that the Colonists have laboured under grievances. The Stamp Act was deemed as exceptionable as any of the Acts of which we now complain. It was com-

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plained

plained of, or (if you rather choose the term) it was opposed, (not, I thank God! with arms,) and it was repealed. The history of the means, by which it's repeal was effected, is still fresh in our memories: and if it did honour, as no doubt it did, to the persons who then conducted our opposition, it certainly reflects some dishonour on the *Ahitophels* now among us, who have profited so little by so excellent an example.

A conjecture has already been made, that the opinions of the people of Israel on the subject of government were unsettled. Some credit had lately been given to revolutions. It was not long before, that *Rechab* and *Baanah*, sons of *Rimmon* the Be-erothite, natural brothers, as well as *brothers in iniquity*, had *beheaded Ishbosheth*, *Saul's son*, whom *Abner* had made king over Israel. Crimes of so deep a dye occur not but in periods when the minds of men are unusually corrupt: and it is a great aggravation of guilt that, when it is successful, it becomes not only a precedent, but an encouragement to it's being repeated. *Absalom* (no doubt) had so *watched the times* as to know how to improve this disposition of the people to his purposes; or, if he did not, the *counsellor*, whose directions he followed as implicitly *as if a man had enquired at the oracle of God*, could be at no loss how to turn it to his advantage. Whether he owed it to his own talents only, or to the suggestions of *Ahitophel*, his skill in the means of disseminating sedition appears to have been considerable. He *rose up early*, and  
constantly

constantly *stood beside the way of the gate*, by which the people passed *to the king for judgment*. We will not then so wrong his abilities as to suppose that he suffered any of them to pass him uninstructed how to convey defiance and treason even in a petition \*. It is fair also to suppose that the young rebel, now well tutored himself, would not be idle in tutoring others in all those levelling principles so necessary to his cause. There is a fashion in political, as well as in other, opinions : and it is in times of popular commotions, when revolutions are meditated, that the doctrines of natural rights and the natural *equality* of mankind are most countenanced. Then, *all the congregation are holy, every one of them* : that is to say, according to the revived doctrine of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, the governed have the same right to direct and command as those who govern ; and he who should then, though with the authority of an Apostle, exhort men *to be subject one to another*, may expect to be fiercely told that *he taketh too much upon him*. In the quiet and settled seasons of peace alone we may hope to persuade mankind to listen rather to their reason than to their passions. This, alas ! was not the temper of the people of Israel in the time of Absalom : men's minds were inflamed, and therefore as easy to be worked upon by popular declamations,

\* “ Postulabant, non ut assequerentur, sed causam seditioni. “ Et Flaccus, multa concedendo, nihil aliud effecerat quàm ut acrius exposcerent, quæ sciebant negaturum.” — Tacit. Hist. lib. iv.



as they were indisposed to listen to the less captivating dictates of sober argument : and Absalom was now become completely popular. It is fair to draw the conclusion from the general tenor of his practice. For, we read that, *when any man, with the honest purpose of shewing him that respect which inferiors always owe to their superiors, came nigh to him to do him obeisance, he put forth his hand, and took him and kissed him.* In this case, however, as well as in most others of the kind, the ostensible and the real motives were totally different : the pretence was, *that he might do justice to the people* ; but the true object is discovered in his exclamation, *Oh that I were made judge in the land !*

And now, *when the conspiracy was strong, and the people increased continually for Absalom, Ahitophel the Gilonite, David's counsellor, judged it a fit juncture for him also openly to join in a revolt, which no doubt he had long secretly fomented.* We hear of no reluctance nor remorse that he felt on this base desertion of his old and affectionate master. Indeed there is no reason to believe that he felt any "compunctious visitings of nature shake his fell purpose." As his allegiance was not secured by any obligations of religion or ties of conscience, it was natural for him to worship the rising, rather than the setting, sun. All that appears extraordinary and unaccountable in the conduct of so politic a man is, that even his prudence seems to have failed him. He chose the weaker side ; and embarked in a desperate enterprise, in  
which,

which, according to the usual course of human events, it was scarcely possible that he should succeed. To overturn an established government is always, even when most easily effected, an attempt of great moment, requiring great exertions : whereas the best resources of the insurgents in question seemed to be some vague and romantic hopes of an improbable alliance. And, respecting such alliances, David might, with but too much propriety, have expostulated with his traiterous counsellor, in the words which *Rabshakeb* addressed to Hezekiah : *What confidence is this, wherein thou trustest ? Thou sayest (but they are vain words) I have counsel and strength for the war : now on whom dost thou trust, that thou rebellest against me ? Now, behold ! thou trustest upon the staff of this bruised reed, even upon Egypt ; on which if a man lean, it will go into his hand, and pierce it : so is Pharaoh, king of Egypt, to all that trust in him.*

*Ahitophel* either knew not, or did not consider, how much the Almighty is concerned to defeat unjust and rebellious enterprises. For, though *the horse be prepared for war*, and the issue of battles depend on the instrumentality of second causes, yet *victory is of the Lord*. Sometimes (assuredly, for wise and gracious purposes) he may permit iniquitous arms to prosper and triumph over a virtuous cause : but, in general, in wars, as well as in every other public interest, *righteousness exalteth a nation, while sin is the reproach of any people*. War is an appeal to God : those, therefore, who engage in an unjust war, appeal to God

in an unjust cause : and hence it is natural and rational to expect that God should take part against them, and award the victory to that party which has the most justice on it's side.

God forbid, however, it should be here asserted, that, either in public or private life, those only prosper who deserve success ; and those alone are unfortunate *who deal very wickedly*. Sometimes it may be for the general good of mankind, that even a righteous cause should miscarry ; while, to those embarked in it, a defeat may sometimes be more advantageous than a victory : or the cause itself may be better promoted by the failure of immediate success ; which may be withheld, or postponed, that hereafter it may be granted when the gift will be a greater blessing : or, finally, a sinful people may chance to have a good cause, which God therefore may see fit to abandon and frustrate, rather than that it should be supported by wicked men. But a war, entered into by rebellion, is an appeal to God in a cause so palpably unjust, so destructive to human society, and so derogatory to God's authority, that I can hardly think I go too far when I say it is impossible that it should finally prosper. There have indeed been successful rebellions ; but, if you will consult history, you will meet with instances of twenty that have miscarried, for one that has succeeded. Lawful government is the greatest blessing that mankind enjoy, and the very life and soul of society ; without which, men must live together rather like wolves and tigers, than like rational creatures.



tures. To resist and to rebel against a lawful government, is to oppose *the ordinance of God*, and to injure or destroy institutions most essential to human happiness. He, therefore, who can hope that God, *who is a God of order and not of confusion*, will give his blessing to such attempts, does neither more nor less than expect that he will act in contradiction to his most glorious attributes, and cease to be the friend and father of mankind.

By some such hope, however, we must conceive *Ahitophel* (if indeed he ever at all considered his resistance to his sovereign in a religious point of view) to have been actuated : and besides his thus forgetting *the Lord of hosts, and King of kings*, he seems also, on this occasion, to have overlooked some very obvious maxims of human policy. We cannot but be astonished that a person of his sagacity and penetration did not reflect, that though Absalom might like the treason, he could not but hate the traitor. Were it not that *a double-minded man is unstable in all his ways*, he must necessarily have been deterred by a conviction that Absalom could not help concluding (as in fact he afterwards did in the case of *Hushai*) that he, who had been once unfaithful and disloyal, was not very likely to be a true friend to any man, or to any cause. But, eager as he now was in the prosecution of his revenge, his moments of irresolution were not yet come. We find him therefore now *working all manner of mischief* (as an Apostle speaks) *with greediness* ; and exerting such skill to

ruin both his country and himself, as, if directed to a better end, would assuredly have rendered his country happy, *because at unity in itself*; and *also have promoted and brought him to honour*. Unwise, however, as we must conclude our politician to have been in the plain paths of piety and fidelity, we must not so rate his understanding when exercised in the crooked ways of *sedition, privy conspiracy, and rebellion*. The first instance of his advice, that is recorded, is no doubt sufficiently politic; and not the less so perhaps from this circumstance, that it is not very easy, at the first view, to explain it's end and aim. *Go in*, says he to Absalom, *go in to thy father's concubines*\*. The distinguishing feature in *Ahitophel's* character is wicked cunning; that "left-handed kind of wisdom," as Lord Verulam calls it. Although therefore the mere depravity of his heart might, of itself, and without any farther object than it's own base and unnatural gratification, have prompted him to plunge a creature of his own into so unnatural crime, he had too much subtlety to make such an exertion without some scheme of profit or advantage. This first measure of his recommending was in reality a very deep stroke

\* "Igitur cuncta tentanti promptissimum visum ad uxorem ejus *Liviam* convertere."——Tacit. Annal. lib. iv. § 3.

A striking parallel might be drawn between *Ælius Sejanus* (of whom this was said) and *Ahitophel*. Similar parallels also occur in the history of *the Duke of Guise*, in the time of Hen. III. of France; in *Jugurtha*; in *Cromwell*; but more obviously still, perhaps, in the *Earl of Argyle*, who instigated the *Duke of Monmouth* to rebellion.

of policy. He had not forsworn his liege sovereign to take part with a hesitating, undetermined rebel. Absalom, it is true, had *sent spies throughout all the tribes of Israel, and had gone out of Jerusalem with two hundred men that were called*. He had also found some Levites who set up their altars at Hebron, in opposition to Jerusalem. The word Hebron literally signifies an *association*: when, or for what reason it got this name, we have not been told; but its name, however obtained, certainly did not render it an improper place for these new reformers of Church and State to form their new associations in. And here, at Hebron, we may suppose they easily *found favour* with the people, by incessantly insinuating to them, that David, like *the kings of the Gentiles, had too long exercised dominion over them*: but that this should be the case no longer; the time being now come, when, if they were not wanting to themselves, they might *bind kings with chains, and nobles with fetters of iron*. If, as we have conjectured, the people in general, and in particular the associators at Hebron, were deeply tinged with the principles which lead to rebellion, it is natural to conclude that these doctrines, like those of the Pharisees, could hardly fail to make them *twofold more the children of hell*. All these circumstances were in *Ahitophel's* favour. Yet still he must have had some misgivings in his mind: he could not but have had his fears, that a rising so sudden and unnatural, and such an one too as was not more contrary to the general duty than adverse to the general interest,



interest, was not very likely to be lasting. Though a traitor, Absalom was yet a son ; as David, though provoked, was also still a father. A few of the people had indeed *gone out*, and with hostile appearances ; but it was *in their simplicity, and without knowing any thing of the reasons for which they had taken up arms*. It was to be apprehended, therefore, that they might *return to a better mind*. This it much concerned *Ahitophel* to prevent. A politician, whose success depends on popular opinion, must, at all events, keep up that opinion. Hitherto the breach was small, and might soon have been closed : Ahitophel now rendered it irreparable. This he effected by involving Absalom in such a notorious violation of duty, as shewed to all Israel, that he now no longer either wished or hoped for a reconciliation. *Set up*, says he, *a tent on the house-top, that all Israel may witness thy sin and thy father's shame*. Be it for timorous *Annon* to seek privacy and concealment ; let *Reuben* trespass with one of the concubines of his father ; *go thou in unto ten of thy father's concubines*, and this not secretly, but so that thou mayest declare to all the world how totally thou art independent of any control of his : *then shall the hands of all that are with thee be strong* ; that is, then shall we all know what it is we have to expect, and whom we are to trust. Every thing in the history of a disobedient child gives pain to a benevolent reader ; but this of *Absalom* has peculiar aggravations. Thus it was not enough for him *to steal away the hearts* of his father's subjects, but he must  
add

add to it this public insult and dishonour ; and it is not improbable that he felt less remorse in committing this enormous outrage against all decency, as well as duty, than he did at his first timid and trembling essays of disobedience. So progressive is vice ; and such is it's power to harden the human heart.

But it is by no means impossible that, in such a state of the public mind, even such an act might be deemed meritorious. We may now suppose Absalom as much in favour with the people as he had formerly been with his father, and that his fame was echoed *from Dan to Beersheba*. Like *Simon Magus*, he seems to have *bewitched the people with his sorceries* ; and doubtless they conducted themselves just as they afterwards did when *Sheba blew the trumpet* : the whole multitude exclaimed, *We have no part in David ; every man to his tent, O Israel !* And now, a revolt, which erewhile appeared but as *a cloud no bigger than a man's hand*, was ready to deluge the earth with the tempest of a civil war.

Unhappy, ill-judging Israelites ! who could so soon and so ungratefully forget him, your champion, and your guardian ; who, in the plains of *Shochob in Ephesdammim*, had so miraculously rescued you from *Goliath of Gath*, and from the armies of the Philistines ; and of whom the common observation not long before had been, that *whatsoever the king did pleased all the people*. If any thing could have aggravated such folly and such guilt, it was the having chosen the happiest period in all your history for your revolt ;

revolt ; as if the sun could be eclipsed only when it shines with uncommon brightness.

We now draw towards a conclusion of this history of Ahitophel. David, apprehensive of no danger, (and who could have foreseen that a son who came forth of his own bowels should seek his life ?) was of course unprepared for the contest. And though both he and *his men* were *mighty*, and, *when chased in their minds, intrepid as a bear robbed of her whelps* ; yet, on this so unnatural and unprecedented an attack, all their wonted spirit seemed to have forsaken them, and they *were weary and weak-handed*. Tempted by so flattering an appearance of advantage, Ahitophel now proposed to strike a decisive blow—*Let me, says he, choose out twelve thousand men, and I will arise and pursue after David this night ; and I will come upon him when he is weary and weak-handed*. This advice was clearly ungenerous—perhaps it was even cowardly ; but it was politic, and well adapted to attain the end proposed. When a measure has this recommendation, statesmen and warriors are said generally to approve of it \*. By a series of very providential dispensations, however, the traitor's *counsel was not followed* : and this happened because *the Lord had appointed to defeat the good counsel of Ahitophel*. This was an event which, with all his sagacity, he seems never to have suspected. And thus it often happens with men of great worldly forecast and contrivance : they fail in the very instances in which they appear

\* —Dolus an virtus quis in haste requirat ?—Virgil.



to themselves to have taken the greatest precaution ; as if Providence was pleased to attack and defeat them there chiefly where *their great strength lieth*. As far as mere policy could go, no man could plan better than *Ahitophel* did : but *God was not in all his thoughts*, and God loves to *disappoint the devices of the crafty*. As much as human affairs may seem to be left to *time and chance*, his Providence yet takes care that those shall not always be *happy who deal very treacherously*. This was manifestly the case in the instance before us. The Almighty so over-ruled all the events in which *Ahitophel* was concerned, that (as it afterwards happened to *Haman*) *all his wicked devices, which he devised against the Jews, returned upon his own head*.

*Ahitophel* seems to have had little or no sense of religion. We are told indeed of his having been *sent for from his own city, even from Giloh, while he offered sacrifices* : but it is too probable *he offered sacrifices* with the same spirit and for the same purposes only as his confederate *Abfalom* *paid the vows which he had vowed unto the Lord in Hebron*. Some countenance they might give to the conventicles at Hebron, but they certainly were not very cordial friends to the regular National Church : their chief aim, no doubt, was to have *glory of men*. And it is, alas ! no very uncommon thing to see the foulest purposes concealed under the fairest pretences : under no mask does rebellion so often gain admittance, as under that of religion. An appearance of religion *Ahitophel* had,

had, and so had *Cromwell*: but the last act of the life of the former proves that he died as he had lived, *a stranger from the covenant of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world: he hanged himself, and died.* In so doing he performed indeed an act of justice upon himself, which else the laws of his country might have allotted him; but, by thus rushing into eternity, to be *tormented before his time*, he shewed but too plainly that he knew not *how fearful a thing it is to fall into the hands of the living God.* If he had survived the suppression of this rebellion, he must have lived indeed in shame; and, unless his mind was perfectly callous, with infinite self-reproach: but then he might perhaps, in some sort, have atoned for his crimes; and so have died, if not full of hope, yet without despair.

I remember but one other instance, in all the Scriptures, of a desperate sinner who *hanged himself*; and that was Judas, the antitype of Ahitophel. And, under the law, he that was hanged *was accursed of God.* So that, if it were either rational or religious to judge of the malignity of these men's crimes by the fearful nature of their deaths, the guilt of exciting a rebellion would stand upon a footing with that of betraying the Lord of life himself.

And now having seen the end of this rebellion, both as it affected the Leaders and those who were led, I would fain flatter myself that the present fomentors of insurrections among us will not disdain to attend to the means which brought on a catastrophe

strophe so fatal both to Absalom and Ahitophel. Come then, ye perturbed spirits, who, *like the troubled sea, can never rest* ; ye, *whom no God can please, no king can govern* ; ye, *who turn faith into faction, and religion into rebellion* ; come and shew us, if ye can, in what your conduct differs from that of the faithless incendiary whose history we have just been reviewing. If, as ye still sometimes pretend, your true aims stop short of rebellion, what mean, I would ask, all these “disputings, excusings, cavillings upon mandates and directions, if, like certain hollow blasts of wind, and secret swellings of seas before a tempest, they be not an essay of disobedience, and a kind of shaking off the yoke ; especially if, in these disputings, they which are for government speak fearfully and tenderly, and those that are against it audaciously\* ?” Whilst ye pursue the same means, it is natural to expect that the same end should follow. Or if God, in his mercy, should avert from us this forest calamity that can befall a land, I mean a rebellion, and a civil war ; it will not be easy to forget how much we owe to you for the pains which you have taken to bring them on. No longer then, we entreat you, insult us with such mockery of all that is dear and interesting to mankind, by affecting to call yourselves the friends of humanity, whilst ye thus drag helpless infancy from the bosom of a fond parent, and expose it to perish by perhaps a slow and lingering death, but certainly to perish : still less

\* Lord Bacon.



can we allow you the great and glorious character of being the friends of your country. If ye are the friends of America, *Ahitophel*, and *Catiline*, and *Cromwell*, were also the friends of their respective countries, and infinite wrong has hitherto been done to them by their historians.

But, though *the Heathen*, the Ahitophels of our land, should continue to *rage*, and to *imagine a vain thing*, let me, my brethren, hope for better things from you; whose easier and safer lot it is, and must be, still to be governed; and who, in any possible revolution, can but exchange masters. Whatever may be the issue to our Leaders, of the desperate game now begun, to us it must be adverse; we cannot but be losers, without a possibility of gaining any thing but dearly bought experience. It is therefore of infinite moment to us to weigh well the probable consequences of many *resolves*; to which, whether we will or no, we are to be made parties\*. Observe with what caution and address the persons, to whose guidance we are now to be committed instead of our constitutional legislators, endeavour to gain our confidence. We are not yet called upon to aid and abet them in a direct attack upon *the powers that be*: they know that both our judgments and our consciences would revolt at the idea of such a resistance; but they also

\* “Omnes, qui magnarum rerum consilia fuscipiunt, æstimare debent, an id quod inchoatur, reipublicæ utile, ipsis gloriosum, aut promptum effectu, aut certè arduum non sit. Simul ipse qui suadet considerandus est.”——Tacit. *Histor.* lib. ii. § 76.

know, that when once we have been brought to do a little wrong, by submitting to an usurped and unlawful authority, we shall then feel less reluctance to commit a greater. When we have been persuaded to draw the sword, we shall want no persuasion to throw away the scabbard. Thus, when Jehu *wrote letters to the men of Jezreel to set the best and meekest of their master's sons on his father's throne*, they were *exceedingly afraid*, and shrunk back from the mandate. But no sooner had they declared themselves *his servants*, and *ready to do all that he should bid them*, than they became the willing and eager executioners of an infinitely greater crime: *they took the king's sons, and slew seventy persons, and put their heads in baskets, and sent him them to Jezreel.*

Let no man therefore flatter himself, that *thus far he may go wrong, and no farther*. Unless you can resolve not to WALK *in the counsel of the ungodly*, let what befel Absalom and his followers be a warning to you how natural the progress is from WALKING to STANDING *in the way of sinners*, and in due time to SITTING DOWN *in the seat of the scornful*.

In such circumstances your safety lies in your retreat, and in having *no fellowship with those who take counsel against the Lord and against his anointed*. Listen not to their *much fair speech*: like Ahitophel, of whom this was first said, *their words are smoother than oil*, whilst (without a metaphor) *they have war in their hearts*. Let, then, our Ahitophels and our Absaloms, countenanced and supported, like David

in the cave of Adullam, by *every one that is in distress, and every one that is in debt, and every one that is discontented* \*, if God shall see fit to permit them, continue to strain every nerve to engage you to *join in the conspiracy* : be it your wisdom, as it is your duty, to follow the example of the *wise woman of Abel in Beth-maachab* ; and still be in the number of those who are peaceable and faithful in Israel ; and still keep the commandment of the king, and that in regard of the oath of God.

\* “ Quicunque impudicus, adulter, ganeo, manu, ventre, pene, bona patria laceraverat ; quicunque alienum æs grande conflaverat, quo flagitium aut facinus redimeret ; præterea, omnes undique parricidæ, sacrilegi, *convicti* judiciis, aut pro factis judicium timentes ; ad hoc, quos manus atque lingua perjurio et sanguine civili alebat ; postremo, omnes quos flagitium, egestas, conscius animus exagitabat ; hi Catilinæ proximi familiaresque erant. Quod si quis etiam à culpâ vacuus in amicitiam ejus inciderat, quotidiano usu atque illecebris, facile par similisque cæteris efficiebatur.”——Sall. Bell. Cat.

—— “ Eodem anno Galliarum civitates, ob magnitudinem æris alieni, rebellionem cœptavêre ; cujus exstimulator acerrimus inter Treveros, Julius Florus ; inter Æduos, Julius Sacrovir. Nobilitas ambobus, et majorum bona facta, eoque Romana civitas olim data, cum id rarum nec nisi virtuti pretium esset. Ii secretis colloquiis, ferocissimo quoque adsumpto, aut quibus ob egestatem, ac metum ex flagitiis, maxuma peccandi necessitudo, componunt, Florus Belgas, Sacrovir propiores Gallos, concire. Igitur per *conciliabula* et *cætus*, seditiosa differebant, *de continuatione tributorum*, gravitate sænoris, sævitiâ ac superbiâ præfidentium ; et discordare militem, audito Germanici excidio ; egregium resumendæ libertati tempus, si ipsi florentes, quam inops Italia, quam imbellis urbana plebes, nihil validum in exercitibus, nisi quod externum, cogitarent.”——Tacit. Annal. lib. iii. § 40.



## APPENDIX

TO THE

## TWO SERMONS ON ABSALOM AND AHITOPHEL.

THAT Congress, and the friends of Congress, should object to any discourse which did not entirely co-operate with their views, was no more than might have been expected. However weak the author of these sermons might be deemed in persisting to write and preach as he did under so many discouragements, he certainly never was weak enough to imagine that any thing which he could then either say or do would escape their censure. Hitherto, however, all that had been objected to him was general, and therefore much attended to by those only who were already of the party of the objectors. On the delivery of these two sermons, new ground was taken. The author was charged with making his pulpit the vehicle of private slander. It was alleged that the character of Dr. Franklin was more than glanced at in the delineation here exhibited of that of Ahitophel.

To these insinuations it seems fit that some reply should now be made. When the sermon on Absalom was written, the parallel immediately in view was, *the great body of the people* of America, then acting just such a part as, it appeared to the author, Absalom and his followers had acted. The characters

of their demagogues, the leaders of the faction, seemed to be no less exactly pourtrayed in that of Ahitophel.

That, in delineating these characters, I had no particular individuals in my eye, I will not be so disingenuous as to pretend ; for, as all national character must ultimately resolve itself into particular characters, it appears scarcely possible to describe the one, without in some degree adverting to the other. But I do confidently assert, that neither Dr. Franklin alone, nor any one individual, sat for the picture : and I farther assert, that the parallels were attempted, not because some particular traits in them were thought to resemble particular individuals, but because the whole very exactly suited the general description of popular leaders and their adherents.

Dr. Franklin was not then the only *Ahitophel* who “ directed the storm,” nor General Washington the only *Abfalom*. Besides, when these sermons were written, neither the Statesman nor the General were so well known as they now are. I am far from affecting to deny, that I think there is a striking resemblance between Ahitophel and Franklin. For this, I hope, I am not to be blamed ; neither do I claim any merit in having brought this resemblance forward to public view ; because the Doctor’s character not having then so manifestly shewn itself as it has since done, all I can pretend to is, that the resemblance was hit on by anticipation. The mere suspicion, however, of my having aimed at this gentle-

man in the parallel, will be considered by all impartial readers as no mean proof that the likeness is more than imaginary. *I am free to confess* \*, I now see it strongly ; and therefore, though I publish the sermon solely for the sake of the parallel which was originally intended, yet, in transcribing it for the press, I have been at no pains to suppress any of those it's more prominent features, which, I suppose, first excited the suspicion.

Whenever an historian shall arise, possessed of integrity as well as capacity to write a proper history of the American revolt, it will be no inconsiderable part of his task to ascertain the true character of Dr. Franklin. Like the event, in which he took so large a share, he is so very differently spoken of by different parties—is so lavishly praised by some, and so severely condemned by others—that even if we could obtain an exact knowledge of all that he did or said, it would not be easy to decide on his character ; because one of it's most striking features was inconsistency : in his public character, his words and his actions were ever at variance with each other. I happen to have had many opportunities of hearing comments on his character, both from friends and foes ; I have read Dr. Smith's *Rhapsody*, which he calls *An Eulogium on Dr. Franklin* ; and also Mr. Wilmer's *Memoirs* ; and the impression they have made on my mind, differs but little from that which

\* This (now common) parliamentary phrase is an American idiom.



has been often made on it by the contemplation of many other conspicuous public men, viz. that he probably was neither so very great nor so very bad a man as he has been described to be ; and that I still am of opinion, that the parallel between Ahitophel and him is as exact and apt as any in Plutarch.

Franklin's enemies, however bitter, have seldom been found so wanting in truth and justice as to deny him great merit in his philosophical character : it was in Philadelphia chiefly, if not solely, and by his friends, that he was charged with having stolen from an Irish gentleman, of the name of *Kinnerfley*, many of his useful discoveries respecting electricity. How truly he was, or was not, the discoverer of the electrical nature of lightning, I cannot, amid such a variety of contradictory evidence, take upon me to determine : but common justice requires that I should acknowledge, that, in his day, no man contributed more to excite and foster a spirit for investigation and experiment ; and that he first effectually practised, what Lord Verulam first conceived and recommended, viz. the stripping philosophy of her uncouth scholastic garb, and rendering her the companion and friend of all orders of men.

Tender and cautious as I am, and ought to be, of bringing a charge of plagiarism against a man who can no longer vindicate himself, I cannot help observing, that though I certainly have often heard the allegation urged against Dr. Franklin in America, and though it was set down as it now stands in this place

place soon after my hearing it in Philadelphia, from a gentleman who was well acquainted with both the parties, it must strike every one as amounting almost to a direct refutation of the charge, that Kinnerley does not appear to have claimed any share in a discovery to which Dr. Franklin publicly avowed his own claim. But this successful plagiarism, admitting it to have been one, is not the only instance of it's kind imputed to the Doctor. The idea of calming troubled waters, by pouring oil upon them, he might have found in Plutarch\*. It is also mentioned by Pliny†. But if, as I suspect, this idea also was suggested to our philosopher by some preceding writer, it is, I think, most probable he had met with it in the following curious passage in the third book of Bede's History of the Church of England.

\* Τῶν δ' αλλῶν ὑγρῶν διαφανὲς μάλιστα τέλειον ἴσθι, πλείσθω χρώμενον αἱρι. τέτε δε τεκμήριον ἡ καθότις, δι' ἣν ἐπιπολάζει πᾶσιν ὑπὸ τῷ αἱρος ἀναφερόμενον· ποιεῖ δε καὶ τὴν γαλήνην ἐν τῇ θαλάττῃ τοῖς κύμασιν ἐπιρραϊνόμενον, οὐ διὰ τὴν λειότητα τῶν αἰμάτων ἀπολισθανόντων, ὡς Ἀριστοτέλης εἰπεί· ἀλλὰ παντὶ μὲν ὑγρῷ τὸ κύμα διαχέειναι πληττόμενον, ἰδίως δὲ τέλειον αὐγὴν καὶ καταφάνειαν ἐν βυθῷ παρέχει διασπλλομένων τῷ αἱρι τῶν υγρῶν.

“Ad hæc de reliquis humoribus maxime pellucidum est oleum, quia plurimum in se habet æris; cui rei certo id est argumento levitas ob quam omnibus innatat humoribus, ab aëre fursum elatum. Quin et in fluctus marinos si invergatur, tranquillitatem facit; non ventis ob levitatem ejus inde delabentibus, (quod Aristoteles putavit,) sed quia fluctus quovis humore ictus subsidat. Hoc oleo peculiare est, quod splendorem et perspicuitatem in fundo aquæ præstat, aëre humorem dissipante.”—Vide Plut. Edit. Reiske. tom. ix. p. 742.

† Vide Plin. Nat. Hist. lib. ii. c. 103.

“ A certain priest, named *Utta*, a man of great  
“ gravity and sincerity, and one who for his qualities  
“ and truth was well esteemed, was commissioned to  
“ go into Kent for *Eanfleda*, *King Edwin’s daughter*,  
“ who, after her father’s death, had been sent thither  
“ in order to her espousal with *King Oswin*. He was  
“ to travel by land to Kent, but to return by sea; on  
“ which account he addressed bishop *Aidan*, beseech-  
“ ing him to put up fervent prayers to God to prosper  
“ their voyage. The Bishop gave them his blessing;  
“ and having recommended them devoutly to the  
“ protection of God, he also delivered to *Utta* some  
“ jars of hallowed oil, saying, I foresee that, whilst  
“ you are at sea, a sudden tempest will come upon  
“ you: remember to cast into the troubled waters  
“ the oil that I give you, and speedily the tempest  
“ shall be assuaged, the sea be calmed, and you shall  
“ have a pleasant passage. All these things were  
“ fulfilled according to the prophecy. At the be-  
“ ginning of the tempest, when the waves and surges  
“ chiefly raged, the sailors endeavoured in vain to  
“ cast anchor; but the storm increased, and the  
“ waves multiplied so fast, that the vessel was almost  
“ filled with water, and nothing but immediate  
“ death presented itself. In this distress the priest  
“ had recourse to the bishop’s directions, and took  
“ the pot of oil, some of which he cast into the sea,  
“ and the sea was immediately calmed; the sun soon  
“ after shone forth, and the ship proceeded with a  
“ prosperous voyage. Thus the man of God, through  
“ the



“ the Spirit of prophecy, predicted the tempest ; and,  
 “ by the same Holy Spirit, though he was himself ab-  
 “ sent, appeased the same.”

In a collection of Dr. Franklin's Miscellaneous Pieces, published in London in 1779, there is in p. 72, (what is there called) *A Parable against Persecution*, strongly recommended by Lord Kaimes \*. It had before been printed, again and again, in America ; and was frequently quoted by latitudinarians in religion, as a master-piece in it's way. Whatsoever be it's merit, or demerit, it is taken from a publication well known to Divines, intitled, “ *The Liberty of Prophesying*,” by Bishop Jeremy Taylor ; who says he found it in the Jews' books †.

OF

\* Sketches of the History of Man, vol. ii. p. 472, 473.

† See Bishop Taylor's Polemical Discourses, folio, p. 1078.

That these surmises of Franklin's plagiarism may not be considered as quite vague and unfounded, I will subjoin his *Parable against Persecution* ; which Lord Kaimes (whose ideas of Christianity appear to have been at least as liberal as those of Dr. Franklin,) as well as Dr. Franklin's *unbiased* editors, seem to have regarded as an *original*, contrasted with that of Bishop Taylor's, from which I suspect it to have been borrowed.

“ A PARABLE against PERSECUTION ; in imitation of Scripture  
 “ language.” (*Vide* Franklin's Miscellaneous Pieces, p. 72.)

“ AND it came to pass, after these things, that Abraham sat in  
 “ the door of his tent, about the going down of the sun. And behold  
 “ a man, bent with age, coming from the way of the wilderness leaning  
 “ on his staff ! And Abraham arose and met him, and said unto him :  
 “ Turn in, I pray thee, and wash thy feet, and tarry all night ; and  
 “ thou shalt arise early in the morning, and go on thy way. And  
 “ the man said, Nay ; for I will abide under this tree. But Abraham  
 “ pressed

Of the Doctor's political character, which alone we are now called upon to contemplate, it is still more difficult, as has already been acknowledged, to form an accurate estimate. Inconsistency is so general a trait in all human characters, that whenever I see, as I often do, an historian taking extraordinary pains to reconcile inconsistencies, I cannot but suspect

"pressed him greatly : so he turned, and they went into the tent—  
 "and Abraham baked unleavened bread, and they did eat. And  
 "when Abraham saw that the man blessed not God, he said unto  
 "him, wherefore dost thou not worship the most high God, creator  
 "of heaven and earth ? And the man answered and said, I do not  
 "worship thy God, neither do I call upon his name ; for I have  
 "made to myself a God, which abideth always in my house, and  
 "provideth me with all things. And Abraham's zeal was kindled  
 "against the man ; and he arose and fell upon him, and drove him  
 "forth with blows into the wilderness. And God called unto  
 "Abraham, saying, Abraham, where is the stranger ? And Abraham  
 "answered and said, Lord, he would not worship thee, neither  
 "would he call upon thy name ; therefore have I driven him out  
 "from before my face into the wilderness. And God said, Have I  
 "borne with him these hundred and ninety and eight years, and  
 "nourished him, and clothed him, notwithstanding his rebellion  
 "against me ; and couldest not thou, who art thyself a sinner, bear  
 "with him one night ?"

This parable, Dr. Franklin's editor informs us, the Doctor frequently *imposed* on his friends and acquaintance, (much to their credit in Scripture knowledge,) as a part of a chapter of Genesis. The Doctor's talents for *imposition* have never been questioned. The reader has now an opportunity of judging, how far he was, or was not, a plagiarist.

*From Bishop Jeremy Taylor.*

'I end with a story, which I find in the Jews' books : "When  
 "Abraham sat at his tent door, according to his custom, waiting  
 "to

fect the character to be artificial and fictitious. Dr. Franklin is not liable to this imputation : his inconsistencies are every where obvious.

It

“ to entertain strangers, he espied an old man stooping and leaning  
 “ on his staff, weary with age and travel, coming towards him, who  
 “ was an hundred years of age. He received him kindly, washed  
 “ his feet, provided supper, caused him to sit down : but, observing  
 “ that the old man eat, and prayed not, nor begged for a blessing  
 “ on his meat, he asked him why he did not worship the God of  
 “ heaven? The old man told him, that he worshipped the Fire  
 “ only, and acknowledged no other god. At which answer  
 “ Abraham grew so zealously angry that he thrust the old man  
 “ out of his tent, and exposed him to all the evils of the night, and  
 “ an unguarded condition. When the old man was gone, God  
 “ called to Abraham, and asked him where the stranger was? He  
 “ replied, I thrust him away, because he did not worship thee.  
 “ God answered him, I have suffered him these hundred years, al-  
 “ though he dishonoured me : and couldest not thou endure him  
 “ one night, and when he gave thee no trouble?”

‘ Upon this,’ saith the story, ‘ Abraham fetched him back again,  
 ‘ and gave him hospitable entertainment, and wise instruction : Go  
 ‘ and do thou likewise, and thy charity shall be rewarded by the  
 ‘ God of Abraham.’

*The Author's EPIGRAPH on himself.*

[From the same collection of Miscellaneous Pieces, p. 531.]

## THE BODY

of

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN, Printer,

(Like the cover of an old book,

It's contents torn out,

And stript of it's lettering and gilding)

Lies here, food for worms.

Yet the work itself shall not be lost ;

For it will (as he believ'd) appear once more

In a new

And more beautiful Edition,

Corrected and Amended

By

The Authour,

Com,



It is remarkable, that the first political exertions, (if we except his having written a political libel,) or, as he himself expresses it, "Some pasquinades against "the governors†," in which he eminently distinguished himself, were for the purpose of converting a proprietary government into a royal one. That the people would have been benefited by adopting his plan may be granted: but it surely is extraordinary that he should afterwards preside as a republican governor, over that very province which he had proved, in the best work he ever wrote‡, could thrive and

Compare this with the following Epitaph by a young Gentleman of Eton, and the English translation annexed to it, in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for Feb. 1736:

Vitæ volumine peracto,  
Hic finis JACOBI TONSON,  
Perpoliti Sofiorum\* principis:  
Qui, velut obstetrix musarum,  
In lucem edidit  
Felices ingenii partus.  
Lugete, scriptorum chorus,  
Et frangite calamos;  
Ille vester, *marginē erasus, deletur!*  
Sed hæc postrema inscriptio  
Huic primæ mortis *paginæ*  
*Imprimatur,*  
Ne *prelo sepulchri* commissus,  
Ipse editor careat titulo:  
Hic jacet bibliopola,  
*Folio vitæ delapso,*  
Expectans *Novam Editionem*  
*Audiorem et Emendatiorem.*

\* Two brothers, celebrated bookfellers in Rome. See Hor. Epist. xx. lib. i.

† See his Life, vol. i. p. 49.

‡ Historical Review of the Government, &c. of Pennsylvania."

An anonymous work, generally attributed to Dr. Franklin.

be happy only under the immediate protection of the king.

In the affair of the Stamp Act, the duplicity of his character became still more manifest. There is as good evidence as such a case well admits of, that the idea of raising a revenue in America, by means of a stamp duty, originated with him. He certainly spoke of such an Act, as likely to take place, long before it actually did take place. With the promoters of the Stamp Act he had interest enough to procure the nomination of two of the stamp-masters; notwithstanding that in America he opposed the Act with all his might.

Of any settled plan to overturn the established government, at the beginning of the contest, the Doctor should be acquitted. That had, for years, been formed by a junto in the Northern Colonies, who did not at first think him quite a proper man to be intrusted with so important a secret.

It was the severe language of a well-known popular Lawyer, now at the head of the learned profession, during his examination before the Privy Council, which is believed, by those who best knew him, to have determined the Doctor. He never forgave the indignity.—Lord Loughborough was out of his reach; but unfortunately the nation was not—and on her he wreaked his vengeance.

It is said there are letters yet in being, as well as other documents, which, it is supposed, must convince the most partial of his admirers, of the extreme selfishness of his politics, and the unappeasable rancour of his

his heart. But it is much to be regretted, for the sake of true history, that these letters and documents, together with much other important and authentic information concerning him, are in such hands that there is little likelihood they ever can be made public.

In this irritated and vindictive state of mind he left England, and returned to America. It was said at the time, that the moment he set his foot on shore he drew his sword. This was done to shew the people in what temper he returned to them. But, in their reception of him, there were no appearances of that ardour of affection which they afterwards so officiously displayed. This coolness was attributed to their then suspecting that he could be true to no cause; and that, therefore, if he then joined the advocates for hostilities, it would too probably be with a view of betraying them. He was much affected by these suspicions; and for some time he hesitated to which party he should finally attach himself. For sundry days this point was warmly debated between himself and two near and dear friends who are still living, and who, it is hoped, will leave behind them, if it should still be thought right to forbear publishing in their life-time, some account of this and other interesting transactions.

Resentment prevailed: every other argument was parried; but it was impossible to eradicate from his mind his strong sense of the indignity done him in Mr. Wedderburne's pointed sarcasms. It was some time before he gained the entire confidence of his countrymen:



countrymen : but at last he became the chief support of their cause. His partisans, who are not a few, will probably consider it as a compliment, that, to Dr. Franklin, more than to any other one man that can be named, do we owe the loss of America.

There was a littleness and a meanness of mind in his paltry sneer, when, on the dismemberment of the empire, he observed, that the world had now a practical demonstration of the way by which a *great empire might be reduced to a small one*. He had formerly written a small treatise with that title. Of the same cast was his making a point of signing the preliminaries of peace in the same coat which he wore when he was affronted at the bar of the Privy Council.

Dr. Smith, in his Eulogium, asserts, from his own knowledge, that Dr. Franklin *believed in divine revelation* : but of the particulars of his faith he has not condescended to give us any intimation. I nowhere recollect any testimonies in his own writings in favour of any particular religion ; and few, if any, much in favour of religion in general. All that Dr. Smith quotes, as to a belief of a future state, and of the illumination of his mind, might have been said of Socrates : and at any rate, if, in what Dr. Franklin has written, nothing is said against Christianity, it should also be attended to, that nothing is advanced in it's behalf. I cannot find a single sentiment or expression in his works to contradict the opinion, very commonly entertained, of his having been a *Deist*. This the marquis de Chastellux, or rather his translator,

lator, exultingly informs us is the prevalent religion of the principal inhabitants of the Southern parts of America. In Europe it is called *Philosophy*; and it was this latitudinarianism in religion which (this writer adds with far too much truth) contributed in no small degree to the American Revolution.

The admirers of Dr. Franklin, who find it necessary to defend his character, (as the murderers of Charles I. are defended,) not so much for his sake, as for the sake of the cause which he so effectually promoted, unable to deny that these plagiarisms are palpable, content themselves with insisting on their insignificance. I am far from wishing to make more of them than what they are. Be it praise or dispraise to tread in a path already chalked out for him, it would be still more easy to shew that even in his political character Franklin was not an original. He was the humble and even servile imitator, not only of *Abitophel*, but of Catiline and his conspirators. In his success alone, in dying in peace, and in being ranked among the benefactors of mankind, he is without a parallel.

The following ingenious verses, written by the Rev. Mr. Odell of New Jersey, then a missionary and a loyalist, but now employed in a respectable civil station in New Brunswick, seem happily to describe both the merits and demerits of Dr. Franklin's character, and therefore do him more than poetical justice. They were inscribed on a chamber-stove, which

which was made in the form of an urn, invented by the Doctor ; and so contrived, that the flame, instead of ascending, descended :

## I.

LIKE a Newton, sublimely he soar'd  
To a summit before unattain'd ;  
New regions in science explor'd,  
And the palm of philosophy gain'd.

## II.

With a spark that he caught from the skies,  
He display'd an unparallel'd wonder ;  
And we saw with delight and surprise,  
That his rod could protect us from thunder.

## III.

O had he been wise to pursue  
The track for his talents design'd,  
What a tribute of praise had been due  
To the teacher and friend of mankind !

## IV.

But to covet political fame  
Was in him a degrading ambition ;  
A spark which from Lucifer came,  
And kindled the blaze of sedition.

## V.

Let candour, then, write on his URN,  
" Here lies the renowned inventor ;  
" Whose flame to the skies ought to burn,  
" But, inverted, descends to the centre."



## DISCOURSE XI.

THE DISPUTE BETWEEN THE ISRAELITES AND  
THE TWO TRIBES AND AN HALF, RESPECTING  
THEIR SETTLEMENT BEYOND JORDAN\*.

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JOSHUA, ch. xxii. ver. 22.

*The Lord God of gods—the Lord God of gods—he  
knoweth, and Israel he shall know, if it be in rebellion,  
or if in transgression against the Lord (save us not  
this day)——*

**U**NSETTLEDNESS and unsteadiness of opinion  
on points that are merely speculative, and such as, it is  
probable, may ever continue to admit of debate, are  
not, perhaps, of much moment. But, in questions  
which concern essential interests, and in which, truth,  
if diligently and faithfully sought for, may be found,  
there even indecision is dangerous, but error is guilt.  
On such topics it is every man's duty carefully to

\* This Discourse is by way of Answer to a Sermon, on the same  
text and subject, by the Rev. Dr. Smith, preached and printed in  
Philadelphia, in 1775.

settle his faith; and when it is so settled, it is equally his duty to *hold it fast without wavering*. Most of all does it concern those, whose office it is to instruct others, to take good care that themselves be well instructed. The ministers of religion should remember, that it is as much their duty to enlighten men's understandings, as it is to improve their morals. *Ye are the salt of the earth*, said Christ to his Apostles, to preserve mankind from the corruptions of vice and immorality: and ye are also *the light of the world*, to inform and edify the world.

Among the servants of religion, it might be hoped, none could be found who would oppose the interests of religion; nor, among the Sons of the Church, any one adverse to the doctrines of the Church. But *they are not all Israel, who are of Israel; neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children. There is a generation that curseth their father, and doth not bless their mother*. Ye are clean, but not all, said our blessed Lord even of the Apostles; *for, he knew who should betray him*. A worldly temporising spirit is too apt to mingle itself in things, and with men, of all descriptions and characters. This spirit, as heretofore has been the case, is now again unhappily gone forth in great force among the people of the Colonies; not sparing even the Sanctuary. For, among those who serve at the altar, we find many who, calling themselves *the children of light*, resolve, in their generation, to be *wiser than the children of light*. There are many, whose sole aim is to recon-

cile their religion with their worldly interest, and to make the service of God compatible with the service of Mammon.

In times of so inauspicious a character, it must be confessed, that the part to be taken by a plain clergyman (whom the laity have been taught to suspect, and his brethren are almost afraid to own,) is not a point of easy determination. Conscious (as I am) that, with so many and great advantages in our hands, it would be hard to say where there could be any real strength against us, if we were not ourselves one against another, and rendered our adversaries strong by our weakness—conscious that when the shepherds of Israel are divided, and at variance one with another, the sheep also must needs *err and stray*—and conscious also, that, unless it shall please God in his mercy to do more for us than we seem to be disposed to do for ourselves, we shall continue to bite and devour one another till we be consumed, all I can resolve on for myself is, not farther to endanger the peace of the Church by any *vain and unprofitable questions, and contentions, and strivings*. But when I see, as I now do, that, by *holding my peace*, and forbearing to *withstand to his face* a brother in error, as St. Paul withstood St. Peter at Antioch, the peace of the Church, if it is preserved at all, must be preserved at the expence of it's purity, I next resolve, *after the example of John Baptist, constantly to speak the truth, boldly to rebuke vice, and patiently to suffer for the truth's sake*. I hope I am not *self-willed*: I hope I  
feel



feel a becoming respect and deference for the opinions of men distinguished by their genius, their learning, or their station: yet I am not insensible of the indignity offered to literature, and the disservice done to religion, when acknowledged scholars and dignified clergymen so far forget themselves as to become sophists, and to *turn aside unto vain jangling*. As a man, and as a friend, I may feel and allow that though a brother has indeed *slipped in his speech*, yet it may not have been *from his heart*: but, as a Divine, I cannot help recollecting what one of the most eminent of our order long ago declared, that “he who teaches others to sin, is worse than he who commits the crime. He that writes treason in a book, or preaches sedition in a pulpit, and persuades it to the people, is the greatest traitor and incendiary\*.”

When a man of letters, heedless of the true dignity of his character—when a man of genius, ungrateful to Heaven for that precious boon—when an *ambassador of Christ*, unmindful of the sacred duties of his *high calling*, basely prostitutes all these distinguished privileges, by *walking craftily*, and becoming a mean time-server—when *men arising from our own selves speak perverse things, to draw away disciples after them*, it would be to *partake of their sin*, if even one of the lowest of the servants of God did not, on such an occasion, know that there is *a time to speak, as*

\* Bp. Taylor's Liberty of Prophecy, sect. xiii.—See his Polemical Tracts, folio, p. 1025.

*well as a time to keep silence.* “For a sheep to stray,  
 “it is no wonder; but for a shepherd not to wander  
 “himself only, but to lead away his flock from the  
 “green pastures and comfortable waters of divine  
 “truth, to the dry and barren deserts of human in-  
 “ventions, cannot but be as shameful as it is dan-  
 “gerous\*.” If there be any “pulpit casuistry†,”  
 or any other casuistry, which can vindicate such a  
 conduct, I am contented to be unacquainted with  
 it.

It cannot be necessary now to inform you of the  
 occasion which has suggested these reflections. My  
 text is familiar to you: not that I suspect you to  
 have read a sermon on this text, preached at Chester,  
 about the beginning of this century, by the truly  
 learned and pious Mr. Henry; but because you  
 have lately seen it placed (not, perhaps, without some  
 “casuistry”) at the head of a sermon lately printed in  
 Philadelphia, which has been dispersed among you  
 with no common industry. The object of Mr.  
 Henry’s sermon was to shew, that the separation of  
 the Presbyterians in England from the National  
 Establishment was not schismatical, nor rebellious;  
 that of Dr. Smith is to vindicate the congresses, con-  
 ventions, insurrections, and military enrolments,  
 which are now become general in this country; and  
 which, if (in contradiction to his surmises) they ter-  
 minate in rebellion, as many besides myself now think

\* Bp. Hall.

† Dr. Smith, in his Sermon on this text.

they unavoidably must, will bring indelible disgrace, as well as irretrievable ruin, on your country.

When you are informed, that the author of this sermon (on which I now propose to make some remarks) has been my particular friend; that it is not long since I conversed with him on these very subjects, respecting which he then professed to think as I thought, and as every true son of the Church of England must always think, "because it is impossible any one of our communion should be disloyal, without first renouncing his religion\*:" and when also you farther learn, that I am now first informed by the sermon itself (which, in a singular style of friendship, he has been pleased to send me as "a present from the author") of his having changed his opinions, whatever your judgment of the sermon may be, you will at least allow that I have reason to be surpris'd. Were it only from our avowed enemies that we received such discourtesies, we might better bear them; but when they come from *a companion, a guide, a familiar friend*, it is impossible not to feel such a breach of friendship with aggravated poignancy.

With but common justice this text may, instead of an encouragement to revolt, be made subservient to the better interests of religion and loyalty. I doubt not, you foresee that it is my intention to make this use of it. God forbid that I should not! God forbid that, either *for filthy lucre's sake*, or merely with

\* Abp. King's Letter to Bp. Sheridan, prefixed to that Bishop's Sermon, 22d March 1684.



the view of *pleasing men*, I should ever *handle the word of God deceitfully, and teach things which I ought not!* In me such prevarication would be as unwise as in any man it is unworthy: for, unapt as my preaching is to *lead you captive with the enticing words of man's wisdom*, I can hope to merit your attention only by *holding fast the faithful word which I have been taught, that I may be able, by sound doctrine, both to exhort and convince the gainsayers.* I find my commission, in terms no less apposite than they are strong, in the second chapter of the Prophecy of Ezekiel. The agents of faction *cry aloud and spare not.* Are the friends of order and good government the only persons whom silence becomes? Why should I be discouraged by the consciousness of my own inferiority? The cause which I defend is the cause of God: and if God be for me, it is of but little moment who may be against me. The blast of *a ram's horn* from the mouth of a priest asserting the faith, was sufficient to level the walls of Jericho. And faith, if I have it, will *open my eyes*, as it did those of the servant of Elisha; when, though I see an host encompassing our city, I may also see that *they that be with us are more than those that are against us.* By the blessing of God, then, I resolve that I will not, like the courtly prophets of Judah, *speak smooth things, and prophesy deceit*; but, with Isaiah, *shew the people their transgressions, and the house of Jacob their sins.*

Your *suffering*, and (permit me to add) your not *suffering the word of exhortation*, are now become,  
 both

both of them, matters of peculiar obligation, and particular difficulty. When altar is erected against altar, and one minister thinks it his duty vehemently to decry what another earnestly recommends, it cannot but be difficult for the people to judge and act aright. But in all such cases your line of duty is clear and certain: you ought conscientiously to be guided by your own private judgments, and to be careful to follow no preacher farther than he himself follows the faith of his Church. It will indeed mortify and grieve me, more than I am willing to own, if, in thus choosing whom you will abandon and whom you will attend, you should determine to forsake your parish priest and parish church. Every thing that I can do to prevent it, I am bound to do, and will do with pleasure; but to say that rebellion is not rebellion, is no more in my power than it is to *call bitter sweet, and sweet bitter*. I cannot, indeed, help lamenting, that it is my lot to preach to you necessary, rather than agreeable, sermons: but I console myself with reflecting, that, in giving advice, (which is one great end of preaching,) it rarely happens that the suggestions which are most salutary and useful, are also most palatable and pleasant. *Deceitful kisses* are given by an enemy, who means to betray; whilst *the wounds of a friend are faithful*.

Few men can write with more perspicuity and precision than the writer of the sermon before me, when he writes on subjects congenial to his taste. In this sermon, however, he is involved and obscure:  
his

his arguments are forced and unfair: he insinuates more than he chooses to assert; and, by availing himself of words incapable of any exact definition, he excites opinions which he may avow or disavow as he shall hereafter think proper. His professed aim is to shew that the Colonists have been unjustly suspected of rebellion for asserting a justifiable resistance. This he thinks he proves by a parallel drawn between the Colonists and the two tribes of Reuben and Gad and the half tribe of Manasseh; whom some “zealots” of their day, with similar injustice, also suspected of rebellion. It was not left to me to choose the ground on which I am to meet this respectable opponent: I am well contented, however, that it should be that which he himself has chosen. From this same text I now undertake to shew you, that these two tribes and an half were not suspected of a disposition to rebellion altogether without reason; and, that the parallel between them and us is not, on this account, less exact than Dr. Smith supposed it was in the way that he drew it.

The various discontents and murmurings of the children of Israel in general are well known. As a people, they were, proverbially, *stiff-necked* and *rebellious*. No doubt, however, like the rest of the world, some of them were more so than others. There is reason to believe that the tribe of Reuben was eminently refractory. *Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, men of renown* (as the Scriptures call them,) in their opposition to Moses and Aaron, (which in those days



was an opposition to Church and State,) were all of them the descendants of Reuben. Indeed commentators have remarked, that “nothing great is recorded of this tribe in Scripture.” Perhaps they laboured under some original taint, as having sprung (not from the *beautiful and well-favoured Rachel*, but) from *the tender-eyed Leah*. And certainly their progenitor, Reuben, having exceedingly disgraced himself, by *going in unto Bilhah, his father’s concubine*, could reflect no credit on his posterity. So that, notwithstanding his prerogative, as being the first born, namely, *the excellency of dignity and the excellency of power*, (which means that, according to the Jewish polity, he was entitled to a double portion of his father’s estate, the priesthood and the kingdom,) he forfeited them all, and was reduced to a level with the rest of his brethren. This might have been expected from the prediction of Jacob :—of Reuben he prophesied that he would be *unstable as water* : was it then to be wondered at that *he did not excel* ? The double portion to which, by his birth, he was entitled, was transferred by Jacob himself to Joseph and his sons. Nor did his punishment end with his life : it was visited upon his posterity ; for, the kingdom was established, not in the tribe of Reuben, but in that of Judah ; and it is remarkable that the people of this tribe of Reuben were the first who were carried away into captivity by Tiglath-Pileser. Nations and communities, as such, can experience only temporal rewards and punishments. We may be sure,

therefore, that these continual visitations on this tribe were not sent without reason. If we may presume to conjecture what this reason was, it must have been, because they continued to be, *as their forefathers were, a stubborn and rebellious generation ; a generation that set not their heart aright, and whose spirit was not steadfast with God.*

Whether it was that they still smarted and were sore under these signal marks of displeasure inflicted on them as a people, or that it was owing to their natural restlessness of mind ; or whether indeed (as being a people no ways distinguished for their zeal and fortitude in the regular *path* of duty) they were more than usually discouraged by the *evil report* which the spies had just brought of the land and the people which they had gone to search, the history has not recorded. But no sooner did these children of Reuben, with the children of Gad, see the land of Jazer, with the land of Gilead, suitable to their purposes as a settlement, than they petitioned that it might be *given* to them as a possession. The request would, perhaps, at any time have been unreasonable ; but, at the juncture in which it was made, it was particularly ill-judged. A small and inconsiderable people as the whole congregation at that time was, at least in comparison of the greater and mightier nations which lay around them, it certainly would have been impolitic in them to have weakened themselves still more by a division of their strength. The planting of almost a fourth part of their whole body  
in

in a situation in which, in the nature of things, they could not considerably, if at all, have added to the aggregate power of the nation, must have been bad policy, even if they had not also charged themselves with the maintenance of these their separated brethren. But, whether they did well or ill in making the demand, I certainly see no relinquishment of any privileges proposed by the seceders, but such as would have been incompatible with their divided situation, and perfectly useless to them. If it had been otherwise, the deprivation was, on their part, voluntary; and therefore it may be supposed they thought and expected that ample amends would be made to them in some other way.

Moses appears to have exceedingly repented this very selfish application, made at so unsuitable a time, by this *increase of sinful men*. It could not but be dictated, as he intimates it was, by some remains of that same sour leaven of disobedience which had actuated their fathers; when, in the case of the spies, they too *discouraged the hearts of the children of Israel*. This impatience to be put in possession of their inheritance favoured not a little of a distrust in God, who had expressly enjoined that the *land should be divided by lot*. It was, moreover, unkindness in the extreme, and ingratitude to the other tribes, who had just defeated *Sibon king of the Amorites, and Og the king of Bashan*; formidable powers in the country in question, and whom these two tribes and an half could never singly have reduced. In the confidence  
of



of being secure in what they wished to consider as their own immediate and exclusive interest, they seem not to have cared what might become of those by whom they had been *marvellously helped*. Much was yet to be done, and many fierce nations still to be subdued, before the other tribes could come into the quiet possession of the land beyond Jordan. Was this a time for any one part of the whole people to shrink from the common cause, and to think of setting up for themselves? They could never have thought of it, had they not (to use the words of an eloquent and most excellent writer\*) been of so “ignoble and disingenuous tempers as that, forgetful of the Land of Promise, and intent only on the commodity of their cattle, they could have contented themselves to have been part of the herd, and have become like the beasts that perish.” Well might their meek Leader be incensed at their want of public spirit, and sharply ask them, *What, shall your brethren go to war, and ye sit here?*

Nevertheless, that he might *still the people*, as Caleb had just before done, with a *soft* and a favourable answer, he prudently agreed to leave the matter on the footing on which they themselves, on second and better thoughts, had just put it; namely, that they should first go over *Jordan*, armed, with the rest of the children of Israel, to subdue the land there also; and that then they should return to possess the land

\* The Author of the Whole Duty of Man.

in question, and *be guiltless*. Nothing more reasonable could have been proposed. Even the two tribes and an half must have been glad of an opportunity of atoning for their last instance of disobedience, by some signal acts of loyalty and zeal. That done, they might then, on good grounds, hope, that God would, as he had done in other instances of exemplary penitence, permit them to possess the land which they had solicited, though the manner of their solicitation had been somewhat irregular.

But where, in all this transaction, are there any circumstances justifying an inference that it was done in the way of an "original contract \*?" The whole people of Israel alone had a title to the country in question, by virtue of a first grant from their sovereign ruler, and by virtue of conquest also from the former occupants. Of course, Moses had the sole and exclusive right to *give and grant* it in any manner which he thought proper, that was not contrary to the directions of God. That part of the people, to whom at length the grant was actually made, had no right to stipulate for any conditions; for, *they gat not the land in possession by their own sword, neither was it their own arm that helped them*. Accordingly "the terms of settlement" are delivered, not in the cautious style of a contractor, but with all the authority of one who has a right to dictate and to command. And it requires no common

\* See Dr. Smith's Sermon.

skill to find out how the free gift of Moses to these two tribes and an half can come under the idea of a stipulated reward for services ; services which he had a right to command ; and which they could not have refused without a flagrant breach of duty.

A sense of common danger, and a sad succession of common calamities, had now kept this extraordinary people, longer than usual, mindful of the true principles of their government ; and obedient to God, and his servant Moses. Such conduct could not fail to produce it's proper effects. In due time *there stood not a man of all their enemies before them ; and the Lord gave them rest round about, according to all that he swore to their fathers.* To find their labours at last crowned with so happy an issue, was a blessing which might well excite their warmest gratitude. Accordingly we find, with pleasure, that they did make this very proper use of their successes : *the whole congregation of the children of Israel assembled together at Shiloh, and set up the tabernacle of the congregation there.* This done, it naturally and very properly followed, that they should attend to the settlement of their temporal estate. And as there still remained seven tribes which had not received their inheritance, Joshua (who had now succeeded Moses in the command) gave orders for the choosing of *three men out of each tribe, who were to go through the land, and to describe it ;* that lots might be cast for their respective parts. No disputes appear to have arisen in the adjustment of this difficult business. On  
the



the contrary, the people were so well satisfied with Joshua's paternal care over them, that they afterwards allotted him an inheritance among them. With great prudence he laid out *six cities of refuge*, and also made ample provision for the Levites: hence, all that remained to be done was, that *the Reubenites and the Gadites and the half tribe of Manasseh*, who had faithfully kept all that Moses the servant of the Lord had commanded them, should be sent back unto *the land of their possession*, which Moses had given them on the other side Jordan. In not forbearing to rebuke those committed to his charge, when they deserved rebuke, Moses had approved himself worthy of being *beloved of God and men*. Joshua followed his good example, by being equally careful to bestow blame where blame was due, and praise where praise. He dismissed these two tribes and an half with a very honourable testimony of their good conduct; together with a most solemn, affectionate, and judicious charge respecting their future behaviour; and no mean share of the profits of their mutual warfare, *even much riches, with very much cattle, and silver, and gold, and brass, and iron, with much raiment*.

And now we may fancy that we see this little Colony just on the point of sitting down, under the wing of a Parent State, in their new plantation; with all their flocks and their herds around them, and *cattle upon a thousand hills*. For, this district was also literally a land of hills and vallies; and it was also a *place of cattle*, as it comprehended *Basban*,

which is so often mentioned in the Scripture as having been celebrated for it's fat *bulls*, as well as for it's stately *oaks*. No people could possibly have a fairer prospect of happiness: for, in addition to all the great natural advantages of a fertile district, they were still to remain under a theocratic form of government. It is true they were of necessity to be farther removed from the Ark; but it must have been their own fault, if, notwithstanding that disadvantage, they were farther from God.

It would have been strange, if, after such a proof of it, they had not been penetrated with a strong sense of the Divine goodness; and still more strange, if, feeling the full force of such impressions, their gratitude had not prompted them to make their acknowledgment of it public. This appears to have been their own sentiment; for, *when they came unto the borders of Jordan, that are in the land of Canaan, they built there an altar by Jordan, a great altar to see to.* It was erected not only as a monument of their gratitude, but that it might be a memorial to all succeeding ages, that, although they were now about to be divided from the rest of the tribes, yet they were still true Israelites, and meant to remain so; and, of course, that (if I may be permitted to adopt a modern formulary of expression) they were entitled to all the liberties, franchises, and immunities, "to all intents and purposes, as if they had been born and abiding" on the other side of the Jordan.

\* First Virginia Charter.

The erection of an altar, however, upon any occasion, was so novel a procedure in Israel, that we are not to wonder, if, in those days, when motions of the church were as regular and uniform as the orbits described by the planets, it appeared to the tribe who remained behind as a phenomenon hardly less extraordinary than it would now be to see a second sun in the firmament. This altar was indeed *an altar of witness*, and not an *altar of sacrifice*: but, till it was so explained, it could not fail to excite suspicions that those who raised it were about to abandon the true God. They had been expressly warned to *take heed not to offer their burnt-offerings in every place which they saw, but in the place only which the Lord should choose, in one of the tribes*. And, as though the violation of this strong prohibition had not been sufficient, this new altar was (like those dedicated to Pagan deities) an *high one to see to*; whereas it was ordered that an altar erected to the service of God should not exceed *three cubits in height*, and to be *without steps*. It is not sufficient to render an action good, that our intentions are good: prudence, as well as piety, requires that we should *abstain even from appearances of evil*. It would well have become, and indeed it was the duty of, these forty thousand separated Israelites to have apprized their brethren of Canaan of their motives and designs in erecting this altar; as it might have occurred to them, that their taking the steps they did, without the privity of the other tribes, could hardly fail to excite unfavourable



apprehensions. They ought to have reflected, that they were liable to suspicions on the score of former delinquencies: for, to be suspected even when they are innocent, is a tax which transgressors must always expect to pay. They might also have reflected, that times of quietness and peace are too often the fore-runners of commotions and internal broils; just as earthquakes are said to be usually preceded by an unusual serenity and stillness in the air\*. Mankind have everywhere and always been prone to be refractory, and to oppose power: and all history abounds with instances to shew, that, when communities no longer have a common enemy from without, they are too apt to vent their ill humours one upon another, and so to raise up enemies from among themselves. Those who are governed are always ready to set themselves against those who govern†. This is more especially the case with those parts of the com-

\* The happy circumstances of the Colonies, before their last fatal breach with this country, are admirably described by Lord Clarendon, where he speaks of the singular felicity of the times before the grand rebellion. They were “justly looked upon as the garden of the world: and they enjoyed the greatest calm, and the fullest measure of felicity, that any people in any age, for so long a time together, have ever been blessed with, to the wonder and envy of all other parts of Christendom.”—Clarendon's Hist. of the Rebellion, vol. i. 8vo. p. 74, et seq.

† Πάντι δήμῳ τὸ κακόν τις καὶ φιλαίτιον ἔστι πρὸς τὰς πολιτευομένας, &c.  
“There is in every people, naturally, something of a malignant and peevish temper against those who govern them, &c.”—Plutarchi Præcepta gerendæ Reipublicæ. Edit. Reiske, 8vo. tom. ix. p. 239.

munity that are at a distance from the seat of government, such as colonies ; in the very frame and constitution of which a principle of revolt seems to be interwoven. All these considerations made against the two tribes and an half. It does not, then, appear to have been either rash or ungenerous in the remaining tribes, on so fair a ground, to have suspected that such consequences might now overtake their brethren as did afterwards befall Uzziah ; whose *heart, when he was strong, was lifted up to his own destruction*. In such a conjuncture, it was not more lawful for them to obey the express command of God \*, *and to gather themselves together at Shiloh, to go to war against them*, than it was prudent. For, “ in  
 “ treasons and mutinies (says a great writer) wise  
 “ Statesmen find it safest to kill the serpent in the  
 “ egg ; as a spoonful of water may quench that fire  
 “ at first, which afterwards whole buckets cannot  
 “ abate †.”

For this conduct, however, the whole congregation are now stigmatised with the appellation of “ zealots.” If by this term the author of the sermon means to charge them with being actuated either by an unnecessary or an unjustifiable zeal, the propriety of it's application to them is denied. They thought (and certainly not without reason) that their brethren were either setting up altar against altar, to worship the Lord in another place and manner than he had appointed, or were falling into idolatry. In either

\* See Deut. xii. ver. 13.

† Bp. Hall.

case, it was their duty to vindicate the laws of God, lest, by forbearing to punish the disobedient few, they should bring down his wrath *upon the whole congregation*. When, in a better state of things, their brethren had deserved commendation and reward, they had not been backward to bestow them: it was, therefore, now still more incumbent on them to be impartially and strictly just.

That the people regularly assembled at Shiloh were in earnest, and even *zealous* in a cause which they believed to be the cause of God and their country, it would be doing them much wrong to deny: and that a writer, who has very different principles and purposes to promote, should disapprove of such *zeal*\*, is perhaps no more than might naturally be expected. But, had it been only for the sake of saving appearances, some praise might have been bestowed on them for that true spirit of candour, moderation, and charity, by which their *zeal* was regulated. First appearances were certainly not in favour of their brethren: but recollecting, possibly, (what is well expressed by a writer of our own,) that “to be slow to wrath is to make haste to heaven;” and also that a *soft answer* might not only break down an altar, but (according to Solomon) *break the very bones*, they would not proceed to extremities till they had first sent a solemn embassy to the suspected tribes. By these means an opportunity was given them of vindi-

\* “—it is good to be zealously affected always in a good thing—”  
Galat. iv. ver. 18.



cating their conduct, if it admitted of vindication ; or, if not, of acknowledging their error, and promising to atone for it by a more dutiful deportment in future. The temper of Phinehas, in the discharge of his commission, was of a piece with that of the persons who sent him ; full of piety, disinterestedness, and benevolence. He could not defend, but he endeavoured to palliate, the conduct against which he was commissioned to remonstrate. *If the land of your possession, says he to the two tribes and an half, be unclean, then pass ye over unto the land of the possession of the Lord, wherein the Lord's tabernacle dwelleth, and take possession among us : but rebel not against the Lord, nor rebel against us, in building you an altar, beside the altar of the Lord our God.*

Happily this was an era in which virtue and good sense were not wholly stifled by the passions and prejudices of party. Instead of any upbraidings for their having been unjustly suspected ; instead of an equivocal and evasive answer, such as a narrow policy might have suggested ; instead of replying by recriminations, which (whether well or ill founded) would, in such a state of things, most likely have made what was already bad much worse, these two tribes and an half are careful only, with a most exemplary ingenuousness, and an honestardour, to assert their innocence, as they do in the text : *The Lord God of gods, the Lord God of gods, he knoweth, and Israel he shall know, if it be in rebellion against our Parent State, or in transgression against the Lord,* by a foul apostacy from the re-

ligion of our fathers, that we have set up this altar, *save us not this day!* Conscious of the purity of their intentions, they appeal to God; and call upon him to bless them only as they are clear of any designs of a revolt. Their apology was accepted, because it was true. And thus, by prudence, and a mutual good temper, the gathering cloud was dispersed; and a calamity averted, which, else, might have involved them both in irretrievable ruin.

And now, having shewn, as I proposed, that if these two tribes and an half were suspected of meditating a rebellion, they were not suspected without reason—I go on to shew, in the second place, that we resemble them in both these respects; that is to say, in having been suspected of the same crime, and in having given cause for suspicion. “In the farther parallel now to “be drawn,” I also think myself happy, that the circumstances of resemblance to be adverted to are such as “require not the least sacrifice either of truth or “virtue\*.”

I should imagine it must have already occurred to you, that, like the tribe of Reuben, some of the first settlers in America lay under a just suspicion of cherishing hereditary wrong principles. The Northern Colonies in particular were, with very few exceptions, peopled by avowed Independents; whose principles, whether in themselves well or ill-founded, even those who maintain them will hardly pretend are propitious to those of the British Constitution. As for the

\* Dr. Smith's Sermon.

other Colonies, I persuade myself I shall hardly be thought to speak of them either harshly or unjustly when I compare them with the other tribe of Gad. The word Gad literally signifies *a troop*; and, it is probable, was given as a name to this tribe, from it's being expressive of their character. In this respect a majority of the American Colonists may very fairly be called *Gadites*: for, were not the original emigrants who settled those Colonies a multitude of people from various countries, of various habits and manners—bound together by no other common principle but that of interest or necessity? In the first planting, then, of this our American Gilead, it would seem that, like the Gileadites beyond Jordan, we cannot fairly reckon on our having set out with more than half a tribe of faithful Manassites. By Manassites, as applied to us, I mean those persons who, from education and principle, were sincerely and earnestly attached to our Constitution both in Church and State, and who really emigrated on that truly Patriotic and Christian motive assigned in some of our charters; “the enlargement of the Empire, and the farther propagation of Christianity.” Manasseh signifies *the being forgotten*: and it is remarkable that the prophecy of Jacob concerning the descendants of Joseph, and of course the descendants of this tribe, was, that *the archers should sorely grieve them, and shoot at them, and hate them*. To shew you “how far this part of the parallel holds good\*,” permit me to

\* Dr. Smith's Sermon.



refer you to the sad history of what has befallen our own Church. A tale might be unfolded, how she has been *forgotten* by her friends, and *shot at* by her enemies, which might well make *the ears* of every churchman *that hears it to tingle*:—but, I forbear; this being no time for churchmen to hope to obtain a patient and candid hearing. As for the other parts of the parallel, I appeal to the whole series of our American history, in which there is hardly a page which is not stained with some melancholy instance of *the great searchings of heart* which we have had because of *the divisions of Reuben*. I believe the people of the four New England governments may challenge the whole world to produce another people who, without actually rebelling, have, throughout their whole history, been so disaffected to government, so uniformly intolerant towards all who differ from them, so dissatisfied and disorderly, and, in short, so impatient under every proper legal restraint not imposed by themselves. He would not run much hazard of asserting more than might be proved, who should take upon him to affirm, that even those misguided men who, about thirty years ago, in Scotland, suffered death for being rebels, were, in every proper sense of the word, still better subjects, and more to be depended on, even by the Family now on the throne, than their liege subjects of New England in the securest periods of peace.

It has been boasted, that the Colonists chearfully submitted to sundry “local inconveniencies:” as though they had done so entirely for the sake of the

Parent

Parent State. Insinuations in this way are more mischievous than even direct assertions; because these latter, when false, may be refuted: whereas an insinuation, however groundless, can be done away only by another. These "inconveniencies," it is apprehended, neither have been, nor are, greater than many to which all the other tribes or districts of the empire have in their turns been called on to submit. But, be they ever so great, even beyond the standard at which we take such pains to have them estimated, it should not be overlooked, in stating them, that they have been of our own seeking. Like the two tribes and an half, we came hither at our own desire. We were not lopped off the parent trunk as useless or noxious limbs, *to be hewn down, or cast into the fire*; but carefully transplanted here: and we have ever since been assiduously and tenderly cherished by that Parent State, who has emphatically been our *nursing-father* and our *nursing-mother*. No part of the empire has received so much from Government, or contributed so little, as the British Colonies in North America. How far they, in return, have been benefited by us; and what might now have been the condition of Great Britain, if she had never possessed these Colonies, or if she should now cease to possess them; are complex and difficult problems in politics, which I pretend not to solve. But it is neither a complex nor a difficult point to prove, that, owing almost solely to the protection and patronage of the Parent State, we have rapidly risen to a degree of respectability,

bility, and “an height of felicity, scarce ever experienced by any other people\*.” That we have “shared their toil, and fought by their side,” they will not deny; nor can we, without manifest injustice and ingratitude, deny, that, whenever we have done so, it was to drive away an enemy from our own quarters. They had but a remote interest in such wars, being concerned in them chiefly as they concerned us: whilst we were immediately interested, and must either have fought, or have given up our inheritance. That, after this, they dismissed us *laden with silver and with gold*†, for having lent only a feeble and very unequal aid to the avenging of our own quarrel, was an instance of *zeal*, for which, I confess, either in the text or any where else, I in vain look for a parallel.

Our parent tribes are next vauntingly asked, “What high altars we have raised to alarm our British Israel? and why the congregations of our brethren have gathered themselves together against us‡?” To these home questions, answers equally home might easily be given; but, on so delicate a point, it behoves me for obvious reasons to be cautious. A direct answer is not necessary: consult your own consciences. I wrong you much if, amidst all this

\* Dr. Smith's Sermon.

† This alludes to the parliamentary grants made to reimburse the Colonies for the sums which they advanced during the war against the French in North America, terminated in 1763.

‡ Dr. Smith's Sermon.



“pulpit casuistry,” your consciences do not tell you, “and in accents louder than thunder,” that these *wars and rumours of wars*, at least on the part of the Parent State, are justified by our conduct. The altar that we have erected, or are about to erect, we choose indeed to call an altar of Liberty: but, whatever it’s name be, it’s object too clearly is to counteract and resist, if not directly to deny, the supremacy of the Mother Country. If, therefore, we are consistent with ourselves, we have set up our altar on principles totally dissimilar to those of the two tribes and an half; for, our principle in setting it up at all, is to declare ourselves, in some sense, and to some degree, a separate and independent people; whereas, to have done so would, in their estimation, have been *rebellion*, against which they most earnestly protested. If we intend peace only, for what purpose are we now everywhere, in the words of the prophet Joel, trained and directed to *prepare for war*? why are our *mighty men* to be *waked up*? our *men of war* to *draw near*? and the *weak* driven on to say, *I am strong*? The great objection which the Israelites assembled at Shiloh made to the altar erected by the Gileadites, was the danger to which it exposed *the whole congregation*. This consideration should also have it’s due weight with the Colonists; the consequences of whose conduct, if it really be (as our brethren beyond the Atlantic apprehend it is) unprecedented, unconstitutional, and rebellious, may be fatal not only to ourselves, but endanger the whole empire. Happily for Scotland, and  
for

for the whole kingdom, the mad enterprise of 1745 failed—not, however, till it had brought infinite distress and calamity on that country; but, had it succeeded, the calamity would undoubtedly have been both greater and more extensive. O that, divesting ourselves of our partialities and prejudices, we would scrutinize our own conduct with as much rigour as we do that of the Parent State! We might then, perhaps, instead of laying all the blame on them, find reason to take up the lamentation of Jeremiah, and with him exclaim, *Behold, O Lord! for I am in distress; my bowels are troubled; mine heart is turned within me, for I have grievously rebelled: abroad, the sword bereaveth; at home, there is as death.*

As long as the interests of mankind are so blended and interwoven with each other as in the present state of society they must necessarily be, and as long also as men's passions are so much more listened to than their reason, so long offences must needs come. But, woe be to those persons who, instead of healing our divisions, endeavour to widen the breach! The preaching inflammatory sermons now can have no other effect than that of adding fuel to a flame already kindled, and risen to a very dangerous height. There is something insultingly cruel in the complaint of this sermon-writer, that “in the Parent Land no Phinehas has prevailed; no embassy of great or good men has been raised, to stay the sword of destruction; to examine into the truth of our case, and save the effusion of kindred blood.” If there be one

part of the story in which "the parallel" more eminently "holds good" than another, it is in this part of it. What, I ask, have been the various speeches, proclamations, and addresses, of most of the governors of America, ever since the dispute began, but so many overtures to reconciliation and peace? What have been the circular letters of his Majesty's ministers? and, above all, what was the Conciliatory Proposition, as it was emphatically called, of the British Legislature? In that proposition, with a magnanimity not unworthy of the assembly at Shiloh, they invited and even solicited you to an accommodation almost on your own terms. Even admitting that the proposition was "unreasonable," and such an one as you ought not to have acceded to, still it was an overture of peace, and made by the Parent State: it is therefore peculiarly unjust to upbraid them for not having made it. Pardon me for reminding you, that we have but recently made the discovery that this proposition was "unreasonable." When we first heard of it, and whilst we were left to our own untutored and unbiaſſed judgments, I believe there was but one opinion among us concerning it: we all thought that (as had before been the case with respect to the Stamp Act) these later subjects of dispute would then soon have all been amicably and finally settled. At this moment I see those among you who (very naturally concluding the controversy to be over) actually triumphed over those of us who had disapproved of the mode that was taken to oppose the Acts; as if by that

very



very opposition the country had then carried it's point. Unhappily for both countries, even this peace-offering was soon after found out (by a "casuistry" with which no "pulpit casuistry" may presume to vie) to be "unreasonable, insidious, and unsatisfactory\*." However acceptable the overture of reconciliation was, and is, and ought to be, to the people at large, it held out no particular advantages to some particular persons, who, in their own estimation, were entitled to the greatest: and that, it would seem, was sufficient reason for it's not being received †.

But here I must, in my turn, lament that I am "forsaken by my text." There is a very striking dissimilitude in our conduct from that of these our supposed prototypes in a similar situation. On the remonstrance of Phinehas, and his decemviral colleagues, the suspected Israelitish Colonists gave a decent and a dutiful answer; and what they did corresponded with what they said. "The parallel," alas! here, no longer "holds good." For, without condescending to copy that part of the example of the people of Judah, which was highly commendable, we seem to

\* Congress Declarations.

† "All men expected that both armies would be speedily disbanded, and such returns of duty and acknowledgment made to the king, as might be agreeable to their professions, and to the royal favours he had vouchsafed to his people. But, what provisions soever were made for the public, particular persons had received no satisfaction. Those who expected offices and preferments were left desperate in their hopes."—Clarendon, vol. i. 8vo edit. p. 262.

have

have imitated the only circumstance in it that was exceptionable. When the men of Israel, on the restoration of David, had urged that *they had ten parts and more right in the king* than their brethren of Judah, and that therefore their advice should have been first had, and not despised, it is remarked by the sacred writer, that (as is always the case with those who are in the wrong) *the words of the men of Judah were fiercer than the words of the men of Israel.*

With the view, perhaps, of apologizing, in some degree, for the ungracious reception of so conciliating a proposition, the author of the sermon next tells you, that a “continued submission to violence is no tenet of our Church:” as though the object of the proposition had been to exact a continuance of “submission to violence.” I trust it is unnecessary for me again to repeat, how very unfair a representation this is of the tenor of the offer that was then made to the Colonies. Had the fact even been otherwise, the assertion is a bold one; because I hope the author, with all his zeal for his new doctrines, would be loth to have it suspected that either he, or our Church, holds any “tenets” which are *contrary to God’s word written*: and, that when we are *smitten on one cheek* we are to *give also the other* to be smitten, that we are to *love our enemies*, and to *pray for those that persecute us*, (duties which surely may well be called *submitting to violences*,) are the undoubted doctrines of Scripture, and, as such, “the tenets of our Church.” “The Christian religion,” says one who had studied it  
I i well,

well\*, “both in itself and in it’s author, is a suffering religion ; a religion enjoining suffering, teaching suffering, and rewarding suffering.”

Possibly, however, this “continued submission to violence,” and “absolute non-resistance,” which is next mentioned, and which, this author informs you, “is now fully exploded among every virtuous people,” are considered as synonymous phrases. At any rate his language is inaccurate ; and the position extremely questionable, if not false. I am not sure that in a lawful government there can, properly speaking, be any such thing as *violence*. The decrees or the acts of government may be, and no doubt often are, ill judged and unwise ; strict, severe, and even oppressive : but, as long as they are enacted constitutionally, and according to law, I see not how they can with any propriety be called *violences* : and not to *submit* to them, even when they are most unwise, and, if you will, unjust, is a crime against the law of the land, and a sin in the sight of God. *Violences*, in a political sense, are any exertions or exercises of power by persons not legally invested with power. Whatever such persons take upon them to do in the way of authority, even though it be wise, necessary, humane, and beneficent, is, literally, usurpation and

\* Dr. South.

“Remember, patience is the Christian’s courage.

“Stoics have bled, and Demigods have died :

“A Christian’s task is harder——’tis to suffer.”

Mysterious Mother, A. iv. Sc. 4.

*violence.*



*violence.* “The free-born soul revolts” at the idea of *submitting* to such unauthoritative, lawless behests; and must have been “long debased, and have drank” in the last dregs of corruption, before it can brook “the *damnable doctrine and position*, that any government lawfully established may be denounced, or resisted, by any self-commissioned persons invested with no authority by law, *on any pretence whatsoever*.”

Never surely, on any other occasion, have such unwearied pains been taken, as ever since the Revolution all popular writers have taken, to bring the doctrine of “non-resistance” into disrepute. It might be imagined, that all the best interests of mankind were concerned in it’s being indeed “fully exploded” among every virtuous people.” The fact, however, is, that as the assertion of this doctrine’s being so exploded is indisputably false, so mankind are much concerned in the position respecting the lawfulness of resistance not being generally believed to be true. Were it otherwise, along with the doctrine of “non-resistance,” government itself must also be “exploded;” because it is essential to all government to be irresistible \*.

Too

\* “If it be allowed lawful for subjects, in any case, to take arms against their Sovereign, this must include in them a right of judging whether their present case be such in which they may lawfully resist or no, otherwise they must either have a general power of resistance, and taking arms without any distinction of any cases; to assert which would be all one as to declare them *no subjects, or under no government*; or else they must resist in no case

Too many of the friends of King William, and his successors the Family now on the throne, (very contrary to the sentiments and intentions of those who were the chief instruments in bringing about the Revolution,) thought it for the interest of their cause to vindicate the Revolution on the principle of it's being effected by a justifiable resistance; hoping thereby (in the words of Mr. Locke) "to make good their title to the crown in the consent of the people." It was one of those hazardous principles of policy, suggested by a temporary expediency, which (to the infinite detriment of our country) has more or less ever since pervaded her Councils. To the short-sightedness, the iniquity, and the danger of such policy, the perpetual unsettled state of the kingdom, shaken by two rebellions since it has been so generally adopted, and our present distractions, bear ample testimony. The inconsistency did not escape the penetration of an observing and sensible Foreigner at the time; who remarked, that such principles were then patronized and encouraged as would render the reign of every future British Monarch of the Ha-

"at all. But, to assert that the people, or inferiors, are, of right, judges of the cases in which they may resist their superiors, is as much as to say, they are bound to subjection only as far as themselves shall think fit; and that they may claim an authority over their governors, and pass judgment upon them, and deprive them of their dignity, authority, and life itself, whensoever they shall think it requisite and needful. But this cannot be otherwise than a general confusion in the world."——Dr. Falkner's *Christian Loyalty*, 2d edit. 1684, p. 365.

noverian succession, disturbed, unstable, and precarious \*.

But, whatever doctrines any particular administration, governed only by human policy, may see fit to avow or disavow, the word of God, like mount Zion, *abideth fast for ever*; and the doctrine of “non-resistance” is unquestionably “a tenet of our Church.” It is the uniform doctrine of the Articles, the Liturgy, the Injunctions, and Canons, and Homilies; in one of which I find the following strong words: “Lucifer  
“ was the first author and founder of rebellion; which  
“ is the first, the greatest, and the root of all other  
“ sins. Kings and princes, as well the evil as the  
“ good, do reign by God’s ordinance; and subjects  
“ are bound to obey them, and for no cause to re-  
“ sist, or withstand, or rebel, or make any sedition  
“ against them, although they be wicked men. It  
“ were a perilous thing to commit unto subjects the  
“ judgment, which prince is wise, which government  
“ good; and which otherwise. A rebel is worse

\* . . . . . “Les Torys veritables et proprement dits  
“ sont, en même tems, zélés défenseurs de la maison de Hanover, de  
“ l’église, et de la monarchie. Au contraire, sous le manteau de  
“ Whigs, il se cache des factions, qui, si on leur permettoit de se  
“ fortifier, ne seroient pas moins dangereuses pour la maison de  
“ Hanover, que pour l’église, et pour la monarchie.”—*Reflexions*  
du Dr. Jablonski sur la Lettre de Mr. Bonnet, Résident du Roi de  
Prusse à Londres; adressées au Roi, son Maître, datée de Londres,  
le 17 Mars, 1711.—Extrait des *Memoires de la Vie du Dr. Jean*  
*Sharpe*, Archevêque de York: imprimé à Londres par W. Richard-  
son, &c. dans Fleet-Street, 1767.



“than the worst prince, and a rebellion worse than  
 “the worst government of the worst prince that  
 “hath hitherto been.”

It is an instance of boldness, for which I want a name, to set up the vague “feelings” of mankind in opposition to the Scriptures; and to teach mankind to consider those Scriptures as perverted, when adduced in contradiction to this imaginary voice supposed to “speak in the hearts of men.” What! are the Scriptures true or untrue as they agree or disagree with this novel, undefinable, something called men’s “feelings?” Let our author, if he will, continue to recommend resistance to the people of America, on the authority of “feelings,” which, if they be comprehensible, are certainly not definable; “feelings” suggested by some ideal agent, here called “the Genius of America:” but let him forbear to impose on you such reveries (better suited to poets than divines) on the authority of that *pure and perfect wisdom which is from above*. For, *be ye well assured*, that “the Christian religion doth plainly forbid the  
 “resistance of authority;” and for this best of all reasons, because “the government and peace of  
 “human society could not well subsist on any other  
 “principles\*.”

I farther take upon me to assert, in opposition to our author, that “many of the brightest luminaries

\* See Abp. Tillotson’s Letter to Lord Russell when he was under sentence of death.

“of the Church, near a century ago,” did uniformly maintain the doctrine of non-resistance to be “the true doctrine of the Church of England, agreeable to God’s word.” If the question is to be determined by the authority of names, I am proud to find on my side the archbishops Cranmer, Bancroft, Whitgift, Montague, Usher, Bramhall, Sharp, Tennison, and Tillotson; and the bishops Latimer, Jewell, Andrews, Hall, Brownrig, Sanderson, Taylor, Kenn, Ward, Burnet, Barrow, Moore, Patrick, Wake, and Berkley: and, among the many other eminent dignitaries and divines of our Church, South, Sherlock, Clagget, Stebbing, and Snape; together with those singularly learned men, the non-jurors Hickes, Leslie, and Collier. The same doctrine has also been strenuously maintained by many of the most distinguished reformed divines abroad; viz. by Erasmus, Grotius, Beza, Luther, Calvin, Isaac Casaubon, Peter du Moulin, Allix, and Bourdieu. Our author is challenged to produce a list of divines or scholars equally respectable, to prove (what he confidently asserts) that the doctrine of resistance was preached by the brightest luminaries of the Church, near a century “past;” and that the contrary doctrine is now “fully exploded by every virtuous people.”

Into such inconsistencies do men naturally run, when, not satisfied with the principles held by their fathers, and which have stood the test of ages, they adopt new notions, as mischievous as they are vision-

ary ; concerning which when they attempt to explain themselves, they neither *know what they have said, nor whereof they have affirmed*. We are, indeed, unhappily “fallen on evil days, and evil tongues,” in which it is the fashion to reverse all that our forefathers deemed wise and sacred : and all the wisdom of all preceding times, though founded on the immutable basis of reason and religion, is (by mere assertions, hardly supported by the shadow of an argument) now summarily voted to be the superstition of a dark age. All the good old doctrines of our venerable Divines, founded as they are on Scripture and on sound Philosophy, are now made to give way to (what we are pleased to call) the deductions of Reason; as if it were possible that sound Reason should ever be at variance with Revelation. And St. Paul, the most direct and unequivocal of all writers, is now to be interpreted as if he had written with I know not what of exceptions and tacit reserves. St. Paul wrote as he was inspired. By what “casuistry,” then, can we, with all our supposed accessions of light and liberality, comment into a meritorious duty that conduct which he explicitly calls a damning sin ? Has a succession of ages altered the unalterable natures of truth and virtue : or, are we to set up the loose and debauched opinions of a loose and unprincipled age for the unerring standards of right and wrong ? At this rate, we shall rest our faith, not on the inspired and heaven-dictated dogmas of St. Paul, but on the subtle and uncertain deductions of Mr. Locke, and  
his



his numerous imitators. If resistance to the supreme power of a nation be indeed a virtue, and the practice of it our duty, I confess I can no more see how the reputation of the Apostle is to be saved, than I can see how the peace of the world is to be secured. In truth, where the reason of the subject is set above the law of the land, and the freedom of the magistrate is sacrificed to the freedom of the people ; where kings are, without a metaphor, *bound in fetters*, and subjects, without a crime, claim it as a matter of right to resist at pleasure, government is in fact already overturned, and all the great bonds of human society are dissolved. In such circumstances, all that a careful discernor of the times can allow himself to expect, is, *a certain fearful looking-for of judgment and fiery indignation* to consume such a kingdom. With the absurdity and the guilt of such doctrines our Church, God be thanked, *free in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made her free*, is not chargeable ! *We have no such custom, neither the Churches of God.*

To conclude—With respect to the end we have in view, namely, the preservation of “a great empire, “and re-uniting all it’s members in one sacred bond “of harmony and public happiness,” I trust there is but one mind among us. But, as to the means best adapted to the attainment of that end, your preacher, you find, differs in opinion exceedingly from him who preached “at the request of the officers of a battalion.” Both our opinions, with the arguments by which we endeavour to support them, are now before you.

*Choose*

*Choose ye this day*, then, to which of them you will adhere. God grant that your determination may be such as becomes wise and good men !

Permit me yet farther to add, that, selected as this portion of Scripture was, not for the instruction of the officers of one battalion only, but for the edification of the people of America in general, (as appears by the Discourse's having been published,) it was natural to expect that that part of it, which in your present circumstances might with most advantage have been proposed to your imitation, should have been recommended to you. As, however, this has not been done by the author, it is now the more incumbent on me to press it on your notice. Whatever may be the motives or intentions of those who have set it up, the altar of Liberty is now, beyond all doubt, erected among us ; and, whether with or without reason, it's erection has excited the jealousy of the Parent State. The dispute, therefore, is begun : and all that is of great moment, now to be attended to, is, how it may be happily terminated. You are now in a situation very like that of the Gileadites, when they returned the sensible and very proper answer recorded in the text : *Go ye, and do likewise*. If America can (and it is my firm persuasion that the great body of the people of America very conscientiously can) make the same solemn appeal to Heaven that the Gileadites did, viz. that it is not *in rebellion* that our country is now set forth in hostile array, America is without excuse if it be not made. She will be still more inexcusable if,

when

when such a protestation is made, she does not prove by her conduct that it was made in sincerity.

All the common principles of reasoning must fail if such a conduct on the part of this country would not produce it's desired effect, and if, as Tertullus said to Felix, you would not again *enjoy great quietness* by your connexion with your fellow-subjects on the other side of our Jordan. I add, with not less confidence, that, were the present breach healed, very *worthy deeds* would again *be done*, as we all know has heretofore been the case, *by their providence*. Blessed, for ever blessed, will those good men be, who, *whilst the people stand up, and the rulers take counsel together*, shall, by the lenient arts of persuasion, so mitigate our heats, and so appease our resentments, that, notwithstanding all that has passed, we may again embrace as brethren, and both they and we hereafter *lead quiet and peaceable lives in all godliness and honesty*.

At this moment you stand on an awful precipice; on the very brink of rebellion. A few steps farther, and you will plunge into a gulph which will swallow up every hope of future peace. *To-day*, then, *whilst it is called to-day*, pause and bethink yourselves: if you have already gone too far, I beseech you speedily and carefully to measure back your steps, whilst haply it is in your power. The Parent Tribes of Israel received the once-suspected Settlers of Gilead with open arms; and doubt not but that your Parent State will imitate this conduct. If, as is pretended, you have already asked this boon, and have not received it, it  
has



has been owing solely to your having *asked amiss*. You asked with arms in your hands\*. This was as impolitic, as it was undutiful. Taught by experience, learn ye now a wiser and a better policy : disdain not to take instruction from the inhabitants of Tyre and Sidon, who, in the days of Herod, *came with one accord*, and *having made BLASTUS, the king's chamberlain, their friend, desired peace, because their country was nourished by the king's country.*

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## APPENDIX.

THERE is, in the ninth book of Dionysius of Halicarnassus, a speech of one Spurius Servilius, a patrician, who was maliciously persecuted by the tribunes, so very apposite to the subject of this Sermon, that I cannot resist the temptation of giving it to my Readers in the words of his able translator, Mr. Spelman.

“ Let me speak to you upon this subject with freedom : for, it is consistent neither with my temper to speak, nor with your advantage to hear me, in any other manner. You act contrary both to justice and piety, plebeians, in not acknowledging

\* “ Si quid ab senatu petere vellent, *ab armis discedant*,—  
 “ Romam supplices proficiscantur : eâ misericordiâ atque mansuetudine senatum populumque Romanum semper fuisse, ut nemo  
 “ unquam ab eo auxilium frustra petiverit.”—Sall. Bell. Catilin.

“ the

“ the many great benefits you have received from the  
 “ Senate ; and in resenting their refusal to grant some  
 “ of your desires, which, if granted, would bring  
 “ great prejudice to the public—when this refusal  
 “ does not proceed from their envy to you, but from  
 “ their regard to the advantage of the commonwealth.  
 “ Whereas the best thing you could have done was  
 “ to have paid a deference to their resolutions, as  
 “ flowing from the best of motives, and calculated for  
 “ the general good ; and to have desisted from your  
 “ earnestness. But if you were unable to conquer  
 “ your unprofitable desires by prudent considerations,  
 “ you ought to have aimed at the obtaining the same  
 “ thing by persuasion, and not by violence. For,  
 “ voluntary presents are not only more agreeable to  
 “ those who grant them, than such as are extorted,  
 “ but also more lasting to those who receive them :  
 “ which is a thing, I call the Gods to witness, you do  
 “ not consider ; but are *agitated* by your demagogues,  
 “ like the sea by various winds perpetually succeeding  
 “ one another, and provoked to rage, and will not  
 “ suffer the commonwealth to enjoy the least quiet  
 “ and tranquillity. This has made us prefer war to  
 “ peace ; since, when we are in war, we hurt our  
 “ enemies—when in peace, our friends. However,  
 “ plebeians, if you look upon all the resolutions of  
 “ the Senate to be advantageous to the common-  
 “ wealth, as they really are, why do you not look  
 “ upon this resolution also in the same light ? But, if  
 “ you are of opinion that the Senate do not take the  
 “ least

“least consideration of any thing that is incumbent  
 “on them, but govern the commonwealth unskilfully,  
 “why do you not remove them all at once, take the  
 “government upon yourselves, and make war in  
 “support of your own sovereignty, rather than pare  
 “them, destroy them by degrees, and take off the  
 “most considerable men by your sentences? since  
 “it is better for all of us, in general, to be attacked  
 “by open war, than for every one in particular to be  
 “circumvented by calumnies. However, you are  
 “not the causes of these disorders; but, as I said,  
 “your demagogues, who enflame you, and who are  
 “both unwilling to obey and unable to command.  
 “And their imprudence and inexperience have often  
 “exerted all their power to overset this ship; but  
 “the Senate, who have been reviled by them in the  
 “severest terms, corrected their errors, and kept the  
 “commonwealth upright.

“Whether these things are agreeable to you, or  
 “displeasing, they have been uttered and hazarded  
 “by me with the greatest truth: and I had rather  
 “lose my life, by using a freedom of speech, that may  
 “be advantageous to the commonwealth, than save  
 “it by flattering you.”——*Spelman's Dionys. Halicar.*  
*Book ix. vol. iv. p. 61.*



## DISCOURSE XII.

ON CIVIL LIBERTY; PASSIVE OBEDIENCE, AND  
NON-RESISTANCE \*.

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GALATIANS, ch. v. ver. 1.

*Stand fast, therefore, in the liberty wherewith Christ  
bath made us free.*

IT is not without much sincere concern that I find myself thus again constrained to animadvert on the published opinions of another Clergyman, of great worth and amiableness of character—a Clergyman whom I have the pleasure to know, and who, I believe, is not more generally known than he is beloved. If his opinions had been confined to points of little moment, and on which even mistakes could have done no great harm, I could have been well contented to have let this pass down the stream of time, with a long list of similar patriotic publications, without

\* Preached in the parish of Queen Anne, in Maryland: in answer to a Sermon, on the same text and same subjects, by the Rev. M<sup>r</sup>. Duché, preached and printed in Philadelphia in 1775.

any

any animadversions of mine. But if what he has published, even with good intentions, be, as I think it clearly is, of a pernicious and dangerous tendency, (and the more so, perhaps, from it's being delivered in the form of a sermon,) I owe no apology either to him, or to any man, for thus endeavouring to furnish you with an antidote to the poison which has been so industriously dispersed among you.

To have become noted either as a political writer or preacher, as some (who at least are unacquainted with my preaching) are pleased to tell you I now am, is a circumstance that gives me no pleasure. I was sorry to hear the observation; not (I thank God!) from any consciousness of my having ever written or preached any thing, of which (at least in point of principle) I have reason to be ashamed; but because it is painful to reflect, that it should have fallen to my lot to live in times, and in a country, in which such subjects demand the attention of every man. Convinced in my judgment that it is my duty to take the part which I have taken, though I cannot but lament it's not having produced all the beneficial consequences which I fondly flattered myself it might, I dare not allow myself to discontinue it. The time, I know, has been, when addresses of this sort from English pulpits were much more frequent than they now are. Even now, however, they are not wholly discontinued: sermons on political topics, on certain stated days, are still preached, and with the authority of Government. This is mentioned to obviate a charge,

charge, that I am singular in continuing this practice; as it proves that such preaching is not yet proscribed from our pulpits. That a change, indeed, in this respect, as well in the principles as in the conduct of modern preachers, has taken place among us, is readily confessed: but that it is a change for the better, has no where yet been proved. A comparison of the 30th of January sermons of the present times, with those of our older Divines, might suggest many not uninteresting reflections: but as it is no part of my purpose to seat myself in a censorial chair, I enter not into the disquisition; but shall content myself with cursorily observing, that if the political sermons of the present day be more popular than those of our predecessors, it is owing; too probably, to their being also more frivolous (not to say more unsound, and less learned) than such compositions used to be.

But, without being influenced by the principles or the practices of other preachers, I must, for myself, be permitted to think it incumbent on me to watch and attend to circumstances as they arise; such, more especially, as nearly concern the welfare of the people committed to my charge. In any such politics as do not touch the conscience, nor trench upon duty, I hope I neither feel nor take more interest than mankind in general do: but there is a sense in which politics, properly understood, form an essential branch of Christian duty. These politics take in a very principal part, if not the whole, of the second table of the Decalogue, which contains our duty to our neighbour.



It is from this second table that the compilers of our Catechism have very properly deduced the great duty *of honouring and obeying the king, and all that are put in authority under him.* Reverently to submit ourselves to *all our governors, teachers, spiritual pastors, and masters,* is indeed a duty so essential to the peace and happiness of the world, that St. Paul thinks no Christian could be ignorant of it : and therefore, when he recommends it to Titus as a topic on which he should not fail frequently to insist, he supposes it would be sufficient if his converts were *put in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates, and to be ready to every good work.* This, however, is as direct and clear a commission for a Christian minister's preaching on politics, in the just sense of the word, on all proper occasions, as can be produced for our preaching at all on any subject. Let me hope, then, that I now stand sufficiently vindicated as a preacher of politics (if such an one I am to be deemed) by having proved, that, in thus preaching, I do no more than St. Paul enjoined : all I pretend to, all I aim at, is to *put you in mind only of your duty to your neighbour\*.*

It

\* A very vehement protest against political sermons in general has lately been delivered by a person of great eminence in the political world, which (though aimed perhaps only at one individual Divine, yet being general, and, as such, equally affecting the loyal and the disloyal preacher) it would be unpardonable in the writer of a volume of political sermons to pass over wholly without notice.

. . . . . "Politics and the pulpit are terms that have little agree-  
ment.

It is, however, not a little mortifying to the few friends of the good old principles of the Church of England yet left among us to observe (as it is impossible they should fail to observe) that offence is taken, not so much because some of us preach on politics, as because we preach what are called unpopular politics. Preachers who are less anxious to *speak right*, than *smooth things*, are now hardly less numerous among us, in proportion to our population, than such men were

ment. No sound ought to be heard in the church, but the healing voice of Christian charity. The cause of Civil Liberty and Civil Government gains as little as that of Religion by this confusion of duties. Those who quit their proper character, to assume what does not belong to them, are, for the greater part, ignorant both of the character they leave, and of the character they assume. Wholly unacquainted with the world, in which they are so fond of meddling, and inexperienced in all it's affairs, on which they pronounce with so much confidence, they have nothing of politics but the passions they excite. Surely the church is a place where one day's truce ought to be allowed to the dissensions and animosities of mankind."—Reflections on the Revolution in France, p. 14.

The whole force of this striking passage seems to rest on the term *politics* being understood in it's vague and vulgar acceptance, and merely as referring to the wrangling debates of modern assemblies; debates which, far too often, turn entirely on the narrow, selfish and servile views of party. The term has been, and in such a disquisition ought to have been, used in a much more extended and more dignified sense; comprehending all that long list of duties which every man owes to society in it's public capacity. Every man is at least as much concerned to be a good subject, as he is to be a good neighbour: and so far is a preacher from being chargeable with being guilty of

were among the puritans in the last century : and their discourses are not only preached, but published, “ at the request of battalions, generals, and commanders in chief.” But, wo unto that people who studiously place temptations in the way of the ministers of God to *handle the word of God deceitfully* ! and wo unto those ministers who are thus tempted to *cause the people to err, by their lies and their lightness* !

Let me humbly hope, then, that, whilst I thus  
continue

“ a confusion of duties,” or of “ assuming a character which does not belong to him,” that he acts strictly within the line of his profession, when he explains, as well as he is able, and enforces on the people committed to his care, their public as well as their private duties. Such politics are, literally, the “ healing voice of Christian charity.”

For weak and wicked politics, whether in or out of the pulpit, no plea is here offered : I would humbly suggest only, that, as the Clergy are far from claiming to be more enlightened than others on these topics, there seems to be no reason for supposing that they are less so. Their “ unacquaintance with the world, and inexperience in all it's affairs,” even admitting the fact, cannot fairly be esteemed a disadvantage to them : and their habits of study and reflection are certainly in their favour. So far have English Divines in general been from giving any countenance to “ the dissensions and animosities of mankind,” that in their writings chiefly (which form a large portion of English literature) are any effectual checks to these foul passions to be found : and so little, in general, have they merited the character of being “ ignorant,” either as Divines or Politicians, that men of the first-rate abilities might easily be named, who have distinguished themselves in both capacities. Who is he that will take upon him to say, that the late Dean of St. Patrick's, or the present Dean of Gloucester, were either unlearned Divines, or shallow Politicians ?



continue to plead in behalf of Government, I may continue to experience the same indulgence which those persons do who speak against it. The ground I have taken, I am aware, is deemed untenable; but, having now just gone over that ground with great care, I feel a becoming confidence that I shall not easily be driven from it. The same diligence, the same plain honest course of proceeding which I have taken, will, I trust, produce the same effects with all of you, who, not being yet absorbed within the vortex of party, are still happy in the possession of minds

The peremptory tone with which we of the Clergy are so often interdicted from meddling with politics in our pulpits, has long appeared to me to be more dictatorial than, as the free subjects of a free government, it is incumbent on us to bear. We, surely, are not less at liberty than other men to use our own discretion: nor can it, I bless God! with any shew of justice, be objected to the Clergy of the Church of England, that they have ever in general either preached or written any such politics as are hostile to the interests either of good government or good men.

This is not the first time that Statesmen have shewn an unaccountable jealousy of the Clergy's interfering in political disquisitions. At the accession of the present Family, wishing to discountenance all investigations of their title to the throne, and most afraid of the Clergy, it is said, some eminent infidel writers were employed and paid by Government expressly to write against religion, not because the King's ministers either disbelieved or disliked religion, but because they thought it the most likely means to draw the attention of the Clergy off from politics, and in confidence that their answers would be a sufficient antidote to the poison of the infidels. It is believed that, in the public offices, proofs might be obtained of individuals receiving pensions for writing both against and for religion.

open to conviction. With no others do I presume to argue. That I am persevering in the pursuit of this unpopular course, I readily own ; yet I feel I want spirits to enter on any such discussions with those persons among us, who, settling controverted points with their hands rather than with their tongues, demonstrate with tar and feathers, fetch arguments from prisons, and confute by confiscation and exile.

To find out the true and precise meaning of any passage of Scripture, it is in general necessary to know the circumstances of the writer, and his end and aim in writing. St. Paul, the author of my text, was deeply involved in that very natural but perplexing dispute which soon arose among the first converts, and even among the Disciples, concerning the observance of the ritual services ; and how far they were, or were not, obligatory on Christians. There are few of his writings, in some part or other of which this great question does not come forward. It evidently runs through the whole of this epistle to the Galatians, as well as through this particular verse.

The Jewish zealots (like their ancestors in the wilderness, who ever and anon murmured for want of the flesh-pots in Egypt) were perpetually troubling the infant church on the subject of this question. It became our Apostle, then, diligently to labour after the removal of this difficulty. This he undertakes to do ; and very satisfactorily obviates the difficulty by

a comparison of the two dispensations, the former of which he proves to have been *a yoke of bondage* when put in competition with that perfect *law of liberty* now promulged to the world. The law of Moses was no doubt well contrived and adapted to the singular circumstances of the people to whom it was given ; yet, when a revelation still better adapted to the general circumstances of mankind was made known, it was a most unaccountable instance of folly and perverseness in that people to wish to be again *entangled* in a yoke which neither they nor their forefathers were well able to bear. Emancipated as they now were from so burthensome a service, it was to act the part of madmen still to hug their chains.

Freely offered, however, as the Gospel of uncircumcision now was *to the Jew first and also to the Gentile*, it behoved the latter also (who, as well as their brethren of the law, were *called unto liberty*) to *stand fast*. It is true they were not, as the Jews were, *made free* from the servile observance of *days, and months, and times, and years* ; to which they had never been subjected. But there was another kind of subjection or slavery, not less oppressive, from which they were now released ; I mean the slavery of sin. Heretofore they were *the servants of sin* ; but now, they were *no more servants, but sons* ; and if sons, *then heirs of God through Christ*. Admitted to this blessed privilege, and no longer the children of Hagar and of Ishmael, but of Sarah and of Isaac, the exhortation is with great propriety addressed to them also :



*Stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made you free.*

As the liberty here spoken of respected the Jews, it denoted an exemption from the burthensome services of the ceremonial law: as it respected the Gentiles, it meant a manumission from bondage under the *weak and beggarly elements of the world*, and an admission into the covenant of grace: and as it respected both in common, it meant a freedom from the servitude of sin. Every sinner is, literally, a slave; for, *his servants ye are, to whom ye obey*:—and the only true liberty is the liberty of being the servants of God; for, *his service is perfect freedom*. The passage cannot, without infinite perversion and torture, be made to refer to any other kind of liberty; much less to that liberty of which every man now talks, though few understand it. However common this term has been, or is, in the mouths chiefly of those persons who are as little distinguished for the accuracy as they are for the paucity of their words; and whatever influence it has had on the affairs of the world, it is remarkable that it is never used (at least not in any such sense as it is elsewhere used) in any of the laws either of God or men. Let a minister of God, then, stand excused if (taught by him who knoweth what is fit and good for us better than we ourselves, and is *want also to give us more than either we desire or deserve*) he seeks not to amuse you by any flowery panegyrics on liberty. Such panegyrics are the productions of ancient heathens and modern patriots:

patriots : nothing of the kind is to be met with in the Bible, nor in the Statute Book. The word *liberty*, as meaning civil liberty, does not, I believe, occur in all the Scriptures. With the aid of a concordance I find only two or three passages, in two apocryphal writers, that look at all like it. In the xivth chapter and 26th verse of the 1st of Maccabees, the people are said to owe much gratitude to Simon, the high-priest, for having renewed a friendship and league with the Lacedemonians, confirmed the league with the Romans, established Israel, and *confirmed their liberty*. But it is evident that this expression means, not that the Jews were then to be exempted from any injunctions, or any restraints, imposed upon them by their own lawful government ; but only that they were delivered from a foreign jurisdiction and from tributary payments, and left free to live under the law of Moses. The only circumstance relative to government, for which the Scriptures seem to be particularly solicitous, is in inculcating obedience to lawful governors, as well knowing where the true danger lies. Nevertheless, as occasion has lately been taken from this text, on which I am now to discourse, to treat largely on civil liberty and government, (though for no other reason that appears but that the word *liberty* happens to stand in the text,) I entreat your indulgence, whilst, without too nicely scrutinizing the propriety of deducing from a text a doctrine which it clearly does not suggest, I once more adopt a plan already chalked

chalked out for me, and deliver to you what occurs to me as proper for a Christian audience to attend to on the subject of Liberty.

It has just been observed, that the liberty inculcated in the Scriptures, (and which alone the Apostle had in view in this text,) is wholly of the spiritual or religious kind. This liberty was the natural result of the new religion in which mankind were then instructed; which certainly gave them no new civil privileges. They remained subject to the governments under which they lived, just as they had been before they became Christians, and just as others were who never became Christians; with this difference only, that the duty of submission and obedience to Government was enjoined on the converts to Christianity with new and stronger sanctions. The doctrines of the Gospel make no manner of alteration in the nature or form of Civil Government; but enforce afresh, upon all Christians, that obedience which is due to the respective Constitutions of every nation in which they may happen to live. Be the supreme power lodged in one or in many, be the kind of government established in any country absolute or limited, this is not the concern of the Gospel. Its single object, with respect to these public duties, is to enjoin obedience to the laws of every country, in every kind or form of government.

The only liberty or freedom which converts to Christianity could hope to gain by becoming Christians, was the being exempted from sundry burthen-  
some



some and servile Jewish ordinances, on the one hand; and, on the other, from Gentile blindness and superstition. They were also in some measure perhaps made more *free* in the *inner man*; by being endowed with greater firmness of mind in the cause of truth, against the terrors and the allurements of the world; and with such additional strength and vigour as enabled them more effectually to resist the natural violence of their lusts and passions. On all these accounts it was that our Saviour so emphatically told the Jews, that *the truth* (of which himself was now the preacher) would *make them free* \*. And on the same principle St. James terms the Gospel *the perfect law of liberty*.

In the infancy of Christianity, it would seem that some rumour had been spread (probably by Judas of Galilee, who is mentioned in the Acts †) that the Gospel was designed to undermine kingdoms and commonwealths; as if the intention of our Saviour's first coming had been the same with that which is reserved for the second, viz. to *put down all rule, and all authority, and all power*. On this supposition the apparent solicitude of our Saviour and his Apostles, in their frequent and earnest recommendation of submission to *the higher powers*, is easily and naturally accounted for. Obedience to Government is every man's duty, because it is every man's interest: but it is particularly incumbent on Christians, because

\* John, ch. viii. ver. 32. † Ch. v. ver. 37.

(in addition to it's moral fitness) it is enjoined by the positive commands of God: and therefore, when Christians are disobedient to human ordinances, they are also disobedient to God. If the form of government under which the good providence of God has been pleased to place us be mild and free, it is our duty to enjoy it with gratitude and with thankfulness; and, in particular, to be careful not to abuse it by licentiousness. If it be less indulgent and less liberal than in reason it ought to be, still it is our duty not to disturb and destroy the peace of the community, by becoming refractory and rebellious subjects, and *resisting the ordinances of God*. However humiliating such acquiescence may seem to men of warm and eager minds, the wisdom of God in having made it our duty is manifest. For, as it is the natural temper and bias of the human mind to be impatient under restraint, it was wise and merciful in the blessed Author of our religion not to add any new impulse to the natural force of this prevailing propensity, but, with the whole weight of his authority, altogether to discountenance every tendency to disobedience.

If it were necessary to vindicate the Scriptures for this their total unconcern about a principle which so many other writings seem to regard as the first of all human considerations, it might be observed, that, avoiding the vague and declamatory manner of such writings, and avoiding also the useless and impracticable subtleties of metaphysical definitions, these Scriptures have better consulted the great general  
interests

interests of mankind, by summarily recommending and enjoining a conscientious reverence for law whether human or divine. To respect the laws, is to respect liberty in the only rational sense in which the term can be used ; for liberty consists in a subserviency to law \*. “Where there is no law,” says Mr. Locke, “there is no freedom.” The mere man of nature (if such an one there ever was) has no freedom : *all his lifetime he is subject to bondage*. It is by being included within the pale of civil polity and government that he takes his rank in society as a free man.

Hence it follows, that we are free, or otherwise, as we are governed by law, or by the mere arbitrary will, or wills, of any individual, or any number of individuals. And liberty is not the setting at nought and despising established laws—much less the making our own wills the rule of our own actions, or the actions of others—and not bearing (whilst yet we dictate to others) the being dictated to, even by the laws of the land ; but it is the being governed by law, and by law only. The Greeks described Eleutheria,

\*. . . . “Multo esse indignius in eâ civitate, quæ legibus teneatur, discedi à legibus : hoc enim vinculum est hujus dignitatis quâ fruimur in republicâ ; *hoc fundamentum libertatis* ; hic fons æquitatis. Mens et animus, et sententia civitatis posita est in legibus. Ut corpora nostra sine mente, sic civitas sine lege, suis partibus, ut nervis, ac sanguine et membris uti non potest. Legum ministri, magistratus ; legum interpretes, judices ; legum denique idcirco omnes servi sumus, ut liberi esse possimus.”——Cicero Orat. pro A. Cluentio. sect. 53.



or Liberty, as the daughter of Jupiter, the supreme fountain of power and law. And the Romans, in like manner, always drew her with the pretor's wand, (the emblem of legal power and authority,) as well as with the cap. Their idea, no doubt, was, that liberty was the fair fruit of just authority, and that it consisted in men's being subjected to law. The more carefully well-devised restraints of law are enacted, and the more rigorously they are executed in any country, the greater degree of civil liberty does that country enjoy. To pursue liberty, then, in a manner not warranted by law, whatever the pretence may be, is clearly to be hostile to liberty: and those persons who thus *promise you liberty*, are themselves *the servants of corruption*.

“ Civil liberty (says an excellent writer\*) is a  
 “ severe and a restrained thing; implies, in the  
 “ notion of it, authority, settled subordinations, sub-  
 “ jection, and obedience; and is altogether as much  
 “ hurt by too little of this kind, as by too much of  
 “ it. And the love of liberty, when it is indeed  
 “ the love of liberty, which carries us to withstand  
 “ tyranny, will as much carry us to reverence au-  
 “ thority, and to support it; for this most obvious  
 “ reason, that one is as necessary to the being of  
 “ liberty, as the other is destructive of it. And,  
 “ therefore, the love of liberty which does not pro-  
 “ duce this effect, the love of liberty which is not a

\* Bishop Butler, in his Sermon before the House of Lords, January 30, 1740.

“ real

“ real principle of dutiful behaviour towards autho-  
 “ rity, is as hypocritical as the religion which is not  
 “ productive of a good life. Licentiousness is, in  
 “ truth, such an excess of liberty as is of the same  
 “ nature with tyranny. For, what is the difference  
 “ betwixt them, but that one is lawless power exer-  
 “ cised under pretence of authority, or by persons  
 “ vested with it; the other, lawless power exercised  
 “ under pretence of liberty, or without any pretence  
 “ at all? A people, then, must always be less free  
 “ in proportion as they are more licentious; licen-  
 “ tiousness being not only different from liberty, but  
 “ directly contrary to it—a direct breach upon it.”

True liberty, then, is a liberty to do every thing  
 that is right, and the being restrained from doing  
 any thing that is wrong. So far from our having a  
 right to do every thing that we please, under a notion  
 of liberty, liberty itself is limited and confined—but  
 limited and confined only by laws which are at the  
 same time both it's foundation and it's support. It  
 can, however, hardly be necessary to inform you,  
 that ideas and notions respecting liberty, very differ-  
 ent from these, are daily suggested in the speeches  
 and the writings of the times; and also that some opi-  
 nions on the subject of government at large, which  
 appear to me to be particularly loose and dangerous,  
 are advanced in the sermon now under consideration;  
 and that, therefore, you will acknowledge the pro-  
 priety of my bestowing some farther notice on them  
 both.

It is laid down in this sermon, as a settled maxim, that the end of government is “the common good of mankind.” I am not sure that the position itself is indisputable \* ; but, if it were, it would by no means follow that, “this common good being matter of common feeling, government must therefore fore

\* “This, which is commonly affirmed, that the end of government is *the good of the inferiors*, must be understood *cum grano salis*. For, from this principle, misunderstood, some have collected that because the end is above the means, and more noble, therefore subjects are above their governors ; and so may call them to account for their mis-government, and judge, and punish, and remove them, if they see cause. From which false collections, made by seditious and turbulent persons, infinite troubles, confusions, rebellions, and desolations, have followed. We must know, therefore,

“First, That, to procure the good of inferiors, is indeed the duty of superiors, and one end why God committed the people to them ; but not the sole or principal end of their authority. For, princes receive their power only from God ; and are by him constituted and entrusted with government of others, chiefly for his own glory and honour, as his deputies and vicegerents upon earth : for, *they are his ministers*, Rom. xiii. So that the principal end of their government is the advancement of God’s honour, who is the supreme King and Lord of all the world : and therefore, if they fail in the performance of this trust, they are accountable only to him, who entrusted them ; and not to the people, whom he hath put under them, and whom he never authorised to call them to account, but to appeal to him only.

“Secondly, It is not generally true that all government is only for the benefit of those who are governed : for, some government there is merely for the benefit of the superior ; as that of a lord or master over his servants.”——Bishop Andrews on the Commandments, 1650, folio 331.



“fore have been instituted by common consent.” There is an appearance of logical accuracy and precision in this statement ; but it is only an appearance. The position is vague and loose ; and the assertion is made without an attempt to prove it. If by men’s “common feelings” we are to understand that prin-

The learned Mr. Selden observes of the maxim, *Salus populi suprema lex*, that “there is not any thing in the world more abused. “For, we apply it as if we ought to forsake the known laws, when “it may be for the advantage of the people so to do : whereas it “means no such thing. For, it is not *salus populi suprema lex est*, “but ESTO ; it being one of the twelve tables. And after divers “laws made, some for punishment, and some for reward, then follows this, i. e. *In all the laws you make, have a special eye to the good “of the people.*”——Table Talk, p. 40.

That most famous casuist, Bishop Sanderson, also says, “There is “no man will deny, that *the safety of the people*, i. e. of the whole “community, as that word comprehends the king together with the “subjects, *is the supreme law*. But, that *the safety of the people*, i. e. of “the subjects, the king being excluded, *is the supreme law*, there is “no man will affirm it, unless he be a fool, or an impostor ; a fool, “if he doth believe what he himself saith—and an impostor, if he “doth not believe it. But, if any man will seriously look into the “original of this aphorism, I do believe he will easily grant that it “ought more precisely to be understood of the safety of the prince, “than of the safety of the subjects. This saying came to us from “the Romans, and was then used by them when their republic “did flourish most of all under a popular state. And there is “no wonder that *the people’s safety was the supreme law* with them, “with whom the people themselves were the supreme power. In “the judgment, therefore, of those wise ancients, who were the “first authors of this aphorism, *the safety of the people was the “supreme law* of the people in a democracy, but of the king in a “monarchy.”——Cases of Conscience, Lecture the 9th, § xvii. p. 330. edit. 1660.

ciple in the human mind called common sense, the assertion is either unmeaning and insignificant, or it is false. In no instance have mankind ever yet agreed as to what is, or is not, "the common good." A form or mode of government cannot be named, which these "common feelings" and "common consent," the sole arbiters, as it seems, of "common good," have not, at one time or another, set up and established, and again pulled down and reprobated. What one people in one age have concurred in establishing as the "common good," another in another age have voted to be mischievous and big with ruin. The premises, therefore, that "the common good is matter of common feeling," being false, the consequence drawn from it, viz. that government was instituted by "common consent," is of course equally false.

This popular notion, that government was originally formed by the consent or by a compact of the people, rests on, and is supported by, another similar notion, not less popular, nor better founded. This other notion is, that the whole human race is born equal; and that no man is naturally inferior, or, in any respect, subjected to another; and that he can be made subject to another only by his own consent. The position is equally ill-founded and false both in its premises and conclusions. In hardly any sense that can be imagined is the position strictly true; but, as applied to the case under consideration, it is demonstrably not true. Man differs from man

in every thing that can be supposed to lead to supremacy and subjection, *as one star differs from another star in glory*. It was the purpose of the Creator, that man should be social : but, without government, there can be no society ; nor, without some relative inferiority and superiority, can there be any government. A musical instrument composed of chords, keys, or pipes, all perfectly equal in size and power, might as well be expected to produce harmony, as a society composed of members all perfectly equal to be productive of order and peace. If (according to the idea of the advocates of this chimerical scheme of equality) no man could rightfully *be compelled to come in* and be a member even of a government to be formed by a regular compact, but by his own individual consent ; it clearly follows, from the same principles, that neither could he rightfully be made or compelled to submit to the ordinances of any government already formed, to which he has not individually or actually consented. On the principle of equality, neither his parents, nor even the vote of a majority of the society, (however virtuously and honourably that vote might be obtained,) can have any such authority over any man. Neither can it be maintained that acquiescence implies consent ; because acquiescence may have been extorted from impotence or incapacity. Even an explicit consent can bind a man no longer than he chooses to be bound. The same principle of equality that exempts him from being governed without his own consent,



clearly entitles him to recall and resume that consent whenever he sees fit; and he alone has a right to judge when and for what reasons it may be resumed.

Any attempt, therefore, to introduce this fantastic system into practice, would reduce the whole business of social life to the wearisome, confused, and useless task of mankind's first expressing, and then withdrawing, their consent to an endless succession of schemes of government. Governments, though always forming, would never be completely formed: for, the majority to-day, might be the minority to-morrow; and, of course, that which is now fixed might and would be soon unfixed. Mr. Locke indeed says, that, "by consenting with others to  
" make one body-politic under government, a man  
" puts himself under an obligation to every one of  
" that society to submit to the determination of the  
" majority, and to be concluded by it." For the sake of the peace of society, it is undoubtedly reasonable and necessary that this should be the case: but, on the principles of the system now under consideration, before Mr. Locke or any of his followers can have authority to say that it actually is the case, it must be stated and proved that every individual man, on entering into the social compact, did first consent, and declare his consent, to be concluded and bound in all cases by the vote of the majority. In making such a declaration, he would certainly consult both his interest and his duty; but at the same time he would also completely relinquish the principle of equality,

equality, and eventually subject himself to the possibility of being governed by ignorant and corrupt tyrants \*. Mr. Locke himself afterwards disproves his own position respecting this supposed obligation to submit to the “determination of the majority,” when he argues that a right of resistance still exists in the governed: for, what is resistance but a recalling and resuming the consent heretofore supposed to have been given, and in fact refusing to submit to the “determination of the majority?” It does not clearly appear what Mr. Locke exactly meant by what he calls “the determination of the majority:” but the only rational and practical public manner of

\* The present government of France, having largely experienced the folly and the danger of being consistent in pursuing this system of equality to its full extent, have now abandoned it; but so, however, as still to make a shew of its being retained. They now, very justly, thus define their principle: “*L’égalité consiste en ce, que la loi est la même pour tous, soit qu’elle protège, soit qu’elle punisse.*” Art. 3. Droits. But, after all the pomp and parade they have made about the liberality of their reforms, what is there in this more liberal than all mankind, in all ages, have thought and said, when they drew Justice blind, and balancing her even-poised scales; or indeed more liberal than we find more pointedly expressed in the well-known clause of our own Magna Charta? “*Nullus liber homo capiatur, vel imprisonetur, aut dissolvetur de libero tenemento suo, vel liberis consuetudinibus suis, aut utlagetur, aut exuletur, aut aliquo alio modo destruatur: nec super eum ibimus, nec super eum mittemus nisi per legale iudicium parium suorum, vel per legem terræ. Nulli vendemus, nulli negabimus, aut differemus rectum aut iudicium.*”—Magna Charta, sect. 35.

declaring "the determination of the majority," is by law: the laws, therefore, in all countries, even in those that are despotically governed, are to be regarded as the declared "determination of a majority" of the members of that community; because, in such cases, even acquiescence only must be looked upon as equivalent to a declaration. A right of resistance, therefore, for which Mr. Locke contends, is incompatible with the duty of submitting to the determination of "the majority," for which he also contends.

It is indeed impossible to carry into effect any government which, even by compact, might be framed with this reserved right of resistance. Accordingly there is no record that any such government ever was so formed. If there had, it must have carried the seeds of its decay in its very constitution. For, as those men who make a government (certain that they have the power) can have no hesitation to vote that they also have the right to unmake it; and as the people, in all circumstances, but more especially when trained to make and unmake governments, are at least as well disposed to do the latter as the former, it is morally impossible that there should be any thing like permanency or stability in a government so formed. Such a system, therefore, can produce only perpetual dissensions and contests, and bring back mankind to a supposed state of nature; arming every man's hand, like Ishmael's, against every man, and rendering the world an *aceldama*, or field of blood.—Such theories of government seem to give something



something like plausibility to the notions of those other modern theorists, who regard all governments as invasions of the natural rights of men, usurpations, and tyranny. On this principle it would follow, and could not be denied, that government was indeed fundamentally, as our people are sedulously taught it still is, an evil. Yet it is to government that mankind owe their having, after their fall and corruption, been again reclaimed, from a state of barbarity and war, to the conveniency and the safety of the social state: and it is by means of government that society is still preserved, the weak protected from the strong, and the artless and innocent from the wrongs of proud oppressors. It was not without reason, then, that Mr. Locke asserted, that a greater wrong cannot be done to prince and people, than is done by “propagating wrong notions concerning government.”

Ashamed of this shallow device, that government originated in superior strength and violence, another party, hardly less numerous, and certainly not less confident than the former, fondly deduce it from some imaginary compact. They suppose that, in the decline perhaps of some fabulous age of gold, a multitude of human beings, who, like their brother beasts, had hitherto ranged the forests, *without guide, overseer, or ruler*—at length convinced, by experience, of the impossibility of living either alone with any degree of comfort or security, or together in society, with peace, without government, had (in some lucid in-

terval of reason and reflection) met together in a spacious plain, for the express purpose of framing a government. Their first step must have been the transferring to some individual, or individuals, some of those rights which are supposed to have been inherent in each of them: of these it is essential to government that they should be divested; yet can they not, rightfully, be deprived of them, otherwise than by their own consent. Now, admitting this whole supposed assembly to be perfectly equal as to rights, yet all agreed as to the propriety of ceding some of them, on what principles of equality is it possible to determine, either who shall relinquish such a portion of his rights, or who shall be invested with such new accessory rights? By asking another to exercise jurisdiction over me, I clearly confess that I do not think myself his equal; and by his consenting to exercise such authority, he also virtually declares that he thinks himself superior. And, to establish this hypothesis of a compact, it is farther necessary that the whole assembly should concur in this opinion—a concurrence so extremely improbable, that it seems to be barely possible. The supposition that a large concourse of people, in a rude and imperfect state of society, or even a majority of them, should thus rationally and unanimously concur to subject themselves to various restrictions, many of them irksome and unpleasant, and all of them contrary to all their former habits, is to suppose them possessed of more wisdom and virtue than multitudes  
in

in any instance in real life have ever shewn. Another difficulty respecting this notion may yet be mentioned. Without a power of life and death, it will, I presume, be readily admitted that there could be no government. Now, admitting it to be possible that men, from motives of public and private utility, may be induced to submit to many heavy penalties, and even to corporal punishment, inflicted by the sentence of the law, there is an insuperable objection to any man's giving to another a power over his life : this objection is, that no man has such a power over his own life ; and cannot therefore transfer to another, or to others, be they few or many, on any conditions, a right which he does not himself possess. He only who gave life, can give the authority to take it away : and as such authority is essential to government, this argument seems very decidedly to prove, not only that government did not originate in any compact, but also that it was originally from God \*.

\* Grotius's definition of the supreme magistrate, or "*summa potestas*," whether vested in one or in many, is, that it is "*solius Dei imperio subditus*." This agrees with that of our Church ; "which describes our supreme magistrate, or sovereign, to be "*next under God, supreme*, over all causes, persons, &c." Now, on the principle of those who, without rejecting Grotius's definition, found government on compact, and derive power mediately from God, and immediately from the people, these strange consequences must follow ; viz. that this supremacy is, and is not, "*next under God* ;" that it is superior and inferior, above and below the people, supreme and dependent.

This



This visionary idea of a government by compact was, as Filmer says, "first hatched in the schools; and hath, ever since, been fostered by Papists, for good divinity." For some time, the world seemed to regard it merely as another Utopian fiction; and it was long confined to the disciples of Rome and Geneva, who, agreeing in nothing else, yet agreed in this. In an evil hour it gained admittance into the Church of England; being first patronized by her during the civil wars, by "a few miscreants, who were as far from being true Protestants, as true Subjects." Mankind have listened, and continue to listen to it with a predilection and partiality, just as they do to various other exceptionable notions, which are unfavourable to true religion and sound morals; merely from imagining, that if such doctrines be true, they shall no longer be subjected to sundry restraints, which, however wholesome and proper, are too often unpalatable to our corrupt natures. What we wish to be true, we easily persuade ourselves is true. On this principle it is not difficult to account for our thus eagerly following these *ignes fatui* of our own fancies or "feelings," rather than the sober steady light of the word of God; which (in this instance as well as in others) lies under this single disadvantage, that it proposes no doctrines which may conciliate our regards by flattering our pride.

If, however, we can even resolve no longer to be bewildered by these vain imaginations, still the interesting question presses on us, "Where," in the  
words

words of Plato \*, “where shall we look for the origin of government?” Let Plato himself instruct us. Taught then by this oracle of Heathen wisdom, “we will take our stations there, where the prospect of it is most easy and most beautiful.” Of all the theories respecting the origin of government with which the world has ever been either puzzled, amused, or instructed, that of the Scriptures alone is accompanied by no insuperable difficulties.

It was not to be expected from an all-wise and all-merciful Creator, that, having formed creatures capable of order and rule, he should turn them loose into the world under the guidance only of their own unruly wills ; that, like so many wild beasts, they might tear and worry one another in their mad contests for pre-eminence. His purpose from the first, no doubt, was, that men should *live godly and sober lives*. But, such is the sad estate of our corrupted nature, that, ever since the Fall, we have been averse from good, and prone to evil. We are, indeed, so disorderly and unmanageable, that, were it not for the restraints and the terrors of human laws, it would not be possible for us to dwell together. But as men were clearly formed for society, and to dwell together, which yet they cannot do without the restraints of law, or, in other words, without government, it is fair to infer that government was also the original intention of

\* Plato, of Laws, book iii.

God \*, who never decrees the end, without also decreeing the means. Accordingly, when man was made, his Maker did not turn him adrift into a shoreless ocean, without star or compass to steer by. As soon as there were some to be governed, there were also some to govern : and the first man, by virtue of that paternal claim, on which all subsequent governments have been founded, was first invested with the power of government. For, we are not to judge of the

Scriptures

\* “ To him that shall diligently read the Scriptures, it will be  
 “ plain and evident, that the Son of God, having created our first  
 “ parents, and purposing to multiply their seed into many genera-  
 “ tions, for the replenishing of the world with their posterity, did  
 “ give to Adam for his time, and to the rest of the Patriarchs and  
 “ Chief Fathers successively before the Flood, authority, power, and  
 “ dominion over their children and offspring, to rule and govern  
 “ them ; ordaining, by the very law of Nature, that their said chil-  
 “ dren and offspring (begotten and brought up by them) should  
 “ fear, reverence, honour, and obey them. Which power and  
 “ authority before the Flood resting in the Patriarchs and in the  
 “ Chief Fathers, because it had a very long extent, not only for the  
 “ education of their said children and offspring whilst they were  
 “ young, but likewise for the ordering, governing, and ruling of  
 “ them afterwards when they came to man’s estate ; and for that  
 “ also it had no superior power or authority over or above it on  
 “ earth appearing in the Scriptures : although it be called either  
 “ patriarchal, regal, or imperial, and that we only term it “ potestas  
 “ regia ;” yet, being well considered how far it did reach, we may  
 “ truly say that it was in a sort “ potestas regia ;” as now, in a  
 “ right and true construction, “ potestas regia ” may justly be called  
 “ potestas patria.



Scriptures of God, as we do of some other writings; and so, where no express precept appears, hastily to conclude that none was given. On the contrary, in commenting on the Scriptures, we are frequently called upon to find out the precept from the practice. Taking this rule, then, for our direction in the present instance, we find, that, copying after the fair model of heaven itself, wherein there was government even among the angels, the families of the earth were subjected to rulers, at first set over them by God: *for, there is no power, but of God; the powers that be are ordained of God.* The first father was the first king: and if (according to the rule just laid down) the law may be inferred from the practice, it was thus that all government originated; and monarchy is it's most ancient form.

Little risque is run in affirming, that this idea of the patriarchal origin of government has not only the

“ If any man shall therefore affirm, that men at the first, without  
 “ all good education or civility, ran up and down in woods and  
 “ fields as wild creatures, resting themselves in caves and dens, and  
 “ acknowledging no superiority over one another, until they were  
 “ taught by experience the necessity of government; and that  
 “ thereupon they chose some among themselves to order and rule  
 “ the rest, giving them power and authority so to do; and that,  
 “ consequently, all civil power, jurisdiction and authority was first  
 “ derived from the people and disordered multitude; or either is  
 “ originally still in them, or else is deduced by their consents na-  
 “ turally from them; and is not God's ordinance, originally de-  
 “ scending from him, and depending upon him, — He doth greatly  
 “ err.” “ Placet eis.” — Bishop Overall's Convocation Book,  
 MDCVI, cap. 2. can. 2.

most

most and best authority of history, as far as history goes, to support it ; but that it is also by far the most natural, most consistent, and most rational idea. Had it pleased God not to have interfered at all in the case, neither directly nor indirectly, and to have left mankind to be guided only by their own uninfluenced judgments, they would naturally have been led to the government of a community, or a nation, from the natural and obvious precedent of the government of a family. In confirmation of this opinion, it may be observed, that the patriarchal scheme is that which always has prevailed, and still does prevail, among the most enlightened people \* : and (what is no slight attestation

\* “To fathers within their private families Nature hath given a  
“supreme power : for which cause we see, throughout the world,  
“even from the first foundation thereof, all men have ever been  
“taken as lords and lawful kings in their own houses.”——Hooker’s Ecclesiastical Polity, book i. p. 20.

“From earliest times the people were accustomed to look up to  
“one family, as presiding over national concerns, religious equally  
“and political ; by an hereditary right partaking, in public opinion,  
“of divine authority.”——Mitford’s Hist. of Greece, vol. i. p. 64.

It is the general sentiment of Homer, that Jupiter hath entrusted the sceptre and the laws to kings, that he may govern by them : just as it is the prevailing sentiment of the Scriptures, that, through God, *kings reign, and princes decree justice*. The passages are innumerable, in which Homer calls kings the *shepherds* and *fathers* of their people. Referred merely to Homer, the opinion of those etymologists who derive *πατήρ* from *τηρεω*—ut de Deo sit, *ὁ τοῦ πατρῶν* ; de homine verò, *ὡς τις παιδας τηρεῖ*, though unusual, is by no means to be scorned. Homer’s common phrase for kings, as fathers, is, *πατήρ ὡς ἥπιος γεν* ; intimating, that the authority of kings

attestation of it's truth) it has also prevailed, and still does prevail, among the most unenlightened †. According to Vitruvius, the rudiments of architecture are

was of the genuine and legitimate kind, i. e. paternal; or strict, yet tender.

“ Aristotle's opinion on this point is, that the power of government did originally arise from the right of fatherhood; which cannot possibly consist with that natural equality which men dream of: for, in the first of his politics, he agrees exactly with the Scripture, and lays this foundation of government. The first society, saith he, made of many houses, is a village, which seems most naturally to be a colony of families, or foster-brethren of children and children's children.”—Filmer's Patriarcha, p. 28.

That the Romans also (at least in the early period of their history) considered government as patriarchal, or as derived from, and analogous to, that of fathers over children, is probable from Romulus's having given the name of *patres* and *patricians* to those citizens, to whom the chief share of power was allotted.

† “ Le gouvernement Chinois nous rappelle celui des patriarches. L'autorité que ceux-ci avoient sur leur famille, l'empereur de la Chine l'exerce pleinement sur ses sujets. Tout annonce d'ailleurs, que le gouvernement patriarchal est le source du gouvernement monarchique, pris dans toute son étendue.”—Description de la Chine, par M. l'Abbe Grosier, tom. ii. p. 1.

..... “ Their government and their laws” (viz. those of some savage tribes of Africans) “ appear to have been originally of the patriarchal kind, where the elder of every family was priest and judge.”—Matthews's Voyage to Sierra Leone, p. 73.

..... “ The word Mungo, which the Europeans translate King, signifies only Head-man: and he is always addressed by the title of Fasiè, or *father*.” Ibid. p. 74.

A more striking testimony in favour of the universality of the opinion,



are to be found in the cottage: and, according to Aristotle, the first principles of government are to be traced to private families. Kingdoms and empires are

opinion, that government is indeed (as was said of John the Baptist) *not of men, but of God*, could not well have been given, than has been given by the elegant historian of America. It is the more striking, and more forcible, from it's not having been so intended: for, certainly, nothing could be farther from Dr. Robertson's thoughts than it must have been to give any countenance or support to an *unpopular* obsolete doctrine, espoused by Filmer, and run down by Locke.

"The dominion of the Incas, though the most absolute of all despotisms, was mitigated by it's alliance with religion. The mind was not humbled and depressed by the idea of a forced subjection to the will of a superior; obedience paid to one who was *believed to be clothed with divine authority*, was willingly yielded, and implied no degradation. The sovereign, conscious that the submissive reverence of his people flowed from their *belief of his heavenly descent*, was continually reminded of a distinction which prompted him to imitate that beneficent power which he was supposed to represent. In consequence of these impressions, there hardly occurs, in the traditional history of Peru, *any instance of rebellion* against the reigning prince; and among twelve successive monarchs, there was not one tyrant."—Robertson's History of America, vol. ii. p. 310, 4to edit.

The intelligent reader is requested to compare this pleasing account of this sensible, good, and happy people, with the same author's description of their fiercer and more heroical brethren of the North, who were distinguished by a rampant spirit of liberty; or, as our gentler author (softened no doubt by the mild spirit of whiggism) is pleased to term that spirit, "the pride of independence, impatience under any species of restraint, and a disdain to acknowledge any superior."—Ibid. vol. i. p. 404.

As the idea of a patriarchal government adopted in this Discourse

are but so many larger families : and hence it is that our Church, in perfect conformity with the doctrine here inculcated, in her explication of the fifth commandment,

course is now very generally rejected, chiefly on the authority of Mr. Locke's answer to a treatise on the subject by Sir Robert Filmer ; and as that book is now antiquated, and, where known at all, known only through the medium of the answer to it ; and as also I have lately perused the book, and did not find it deserving of all that extreme contempt with which it is now the fashion to mention it, I could not easily reconcile to myself the neglect of this opportunity to recommend it to my readers also to peruse the book, and to judge for themselves.

The chief point in debate between these two authors relates to "the beginning of Political Societies," or the origin of Government. Filmer's opinion is, that every human being is born the political subject of some other human being ; that infants, the moment they are born, are the natural subjects of their parents ; and that the State, or supreme power of any country, is the parent, or in the place of a parent, to all who are born within it's jurisdiction, entitled to their allegiance, but bound to provide for their guardianship and protection. Mr. Locke's very different opinion is, that all men being born free, equal, and independent, no one could be put out of this estate, and subjected to the political power of another, without his own consent. And that nothing short of the consent of a number of free men, capable of a majority to unite and incorporate into a society, ever did, or could, give beginning to any lawful government in the world. My opinion on both these points has been briefly, and perhaps unsatisfactorily, but very sincerely, delivered in the body of the sermon : to which, as I am not now engaged to write either a direct answer to Mr. Locke, or a defence of Sir Robert Filmer, all that I am solicitous to add, is, that my opinion is the same that it was, as to this point, two-and-twenty years ago.

Mr. Locke, with a great shew of candour, treats Filmer pretty

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mandment, from the obedience due to parents, wisely derives the congenial duty of *honouring the king and all that are put in authority under him.*

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much as controversial writers in general treat their opponents. Even in his preface, and before it was possible he could have shewn that his censures were well founded, unmindful of his own excellent rule, that "railing should not be taken for arguments," he endeavours to excite a prejudice against the author, by rudely taxing him with "glib nonsense." There are, no doubt, in several of Sir Robert Filmer's Treatises, many weak things; for, he does not appear to have been an author by profession—of course he was not so careful in the selection either of his arguments or his style, as more experienced writers usually are, and as no doubt he ought to have been. Many are the imperfections of this nature which his answerer has detected, and exposed with very little remorse: whilst he passes over, without noticing, or at least with a very slight notice, those parts of the Treatise he answers, which alone are of great moment, and which (it is believed) are unanswerable. The leading idea, or principle, of Sir Robert Filmer's Patriarcha is, that government is not of human, but divine origin; and that the government of a family is the basis, or pattern, of all other government. And this principle, notwithstanding Mr. Locke's answer, is still (in the opinion of the author of these sermons) unrefuted, and still true. Some weak arguments, which were unwarily used to defend it, were indeed very satisfactorily refuted: this, however, proved no more than that the answerer was strong only where the first writer was weak.

It is allowed, that the author of the Patriarcha entertained some very extravagant notions on monarchy, and the sacredness of kings: and (what is perhaps still less pardonable) some disparaging and unjust opinions respecting the supremacy of law. On these points his cooler antagonist, who was a bigot (if a bigot at all) to more popular opinions, attacks, and even ridicules him with success. This success would have been greater, had it not been tarnished by many ungentle-



It is from other passages of Scripture, from the nature of the thing, from the practice of Adam, and from the practice of all nations (derived from

and ungentleman-like sneers, which were ever and anon thrown out, on the knight's having been a courtier. This was a low artifice, which Mr. Locke should have disdained; and which, whether he disdained or no, he would probably have forborne, had he recollected that, in the age of Sir Robert Filmer, the being a courtier was a truly honourable distinction.

And all that he has written, as well as all that has been written concerning him, shews, that Sir Robert Filmer, though certainly not so careful and close a reasoner as Mr. Locke, was neither less learned, nor of a less elevated and liberal mind. He was also, if not a profound, yet a fair, candid, and gentlemanly writer. Nor should it be omitted, because it is much to his credit, that he appears to have been actuated by two as noble and as dignified sentiments as can warm the human breast; I mean, loyalty and piety.

Mr. Locke had the good fortune to enjoy a pre-eminent reputation for political wisdom longer than most men who have degraded great abilities by employing them to promote the temporary purposes of a party. Till the American war, he was looked up to as an oracle: and the whole nation implicitly pinned their faith, in politics, on his dogmas. But, when that great controversy between the Parent State and her Colonies came to be agitated, men were under a necessity of examining, thinking, and judging for themselves. One consequence of their doing so was, that the high degree of infallibility, which, till then, had been ascribed to the name and the works of Mr. Locke, was greatly lessened. At length, in 1781, Dr. Tucker, the celebrated Dean of Gloucester, wrote a Treatise (and one of the best he ever did write) on purpose to "consider, examine, and confute the notions of Mr. Locke and his followers, concerning the origin, extent, and end of civil government." Since that time writers in general venture to read Mr. Locke, as they do other authors, without being overawed by the

and founded on this precedent) that we infer that Adam had and exercised sovereign power over all his issue. But the first instance of power exercised by one human being over another is in the subjection of Eve to her husband. This circumstance suggests sundry reflections, of some moment in this argument. In the first place, it shews that power is not a natural right. Adam could not have assumed, nor could Eve have submitted to it, had it not been so ordained of God. It is, therefore, equally an argument against the domineering claims of despotism, and the fantastic notion of a compact. It proves too, that there is a sense in which it may, with truth, be asserted, that

unmerited popularity attached to his name. One of the last, and not least eminent of our political writers, boldly calls him (yet not with more freedom than justice)—“that arch propagator of wild conceits, that wholesale fabricator of fantastical systems of polity, “(accuse me not of political blasphemy!) John Locke, who had “scarcely given birth to this shapeless abortion, when he crushed it “at a stroke, by proving the impossibility of its existence. He “was compelled to acknowledge, that the coming into society “upon such terms would be—only to go out again.”—See a Letter to the Hon. Tho. Erskine, by John Gifford, Esq. p. 56.

Mr. Locke, however, and his followers, in presenting these principles to the public in their most popular form, have the demerit only of having new-dressed principles which are at least as old as the rebellion of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram. In the unhappy reign of the first Charles, those principles were industriously revived and brought forward with great zeal: and there is hardly a principle or project of any moment in Mr. Locke's Treatise, of which the rudiments may not be traced in some of the many political pieces which were then produced. In a collection of “Original  
“Papers

that government was originally founded in weakness and in guilt: that it may and must be submitted to by a fallen creature, even when exercised by a fallen creature, lost both to wisdom and goodness. The equality of nature (which, merely as it respects an ability to govern, may be admitted, only because God, had he so seen fit, might have ordained that the man should be subjected to the woman) was superseded by the actual interference of the Almighty, to whom alone original underived power can be said to belong.

Even where the Scriptures are silent, they instruct: for, in general, whatever is not therein commanded is actually forbidden. Now, it is certain that mankind are no where in the Scriptures commanded to

"Papers relative to the History of the Colony of Massachusetts Bay," which Governor Hutchinson had printed, but which were never published, I find the following passages; containing, if I mistake not, the very essence of Mr. Locke's system. The Paper, from which these passages are taken, is intitled "Libertye and the Weale Publick reconciled, in a Declaration to the late Court of Elections at Newtown, the 17th of the 3d Month, 1637." In this declaration Liberty is thus defined: "That the people may not be subjected to any lawe, or power, amonge themselves, *without their consent*: whatsoever is more than this, is neither lawful nor durable, and insteade of libertye, may prove bondage, or licentiousnesse." This is farther defended from some exceptions made by Mr. Vane, afterwards Sir Henry Vane, thus: "It is clearly agreed by all, that the care of safety and wellfare was the original cause or occasion of common weales, and of many families subjecting themselves to rulers and lawes: for *no man bath lawfull power over another but by consent*; so likewise, by the lawe of proprietie, *no man can have just interest in that which belongeth to another, without his consent.*"



resist authority; and no less certain that, either by direct injunction, or clear implication, they are commanded to *be subject to the higher powers*: and this subjection is said to be enjoined, not for our sakes only, but also *for the Lord's sake*. The glory of God is much concerned, that there should be good government in the world: it is, therefore, the uniform doctrine of the Scriptures, that it is under the deputation and authority of God alone that *kings reign and princes decree justice*. Kings and princes (which are only other words for supreme magistrates) were doubtless created and appointed, not so much for their own sakes, as for the sake of the people committed to their charge: yet are they not, therefore, the creatures of the people. So far from deriving their authority from any supposed consent or suffrage of men, they receive their commission from Heaven; they receive it from God, the source and original of all power. However obsolete, therefore, either the sentiment or the language may now be deemed, it is with the most perfect propriety that the supreme magistrate, whether consisting of one or of many, and whether denominated an emperor, a king, an archon, a dictator, a consul, or a senate, is to be regarded and venerated as the vicegerent of God.

But were the texts usually appealed to on this topic more dubious than (we bless God!) they are, the example of the Christian legislator may, at least to Christians, well stand in the place of all precepts. There are not many questions, in which the interests

of mankind are more nearly concerned than they are in ascertaining their duty as subjects. It is therefore very improbable, that the Saviour of the world should have left the world in the dark, in an affair of so much moment: but that he should have misled his followers, and that Christians should have been exposed to the hazard of becoming bad subjects even through the inadvertence of their founder, it is little less than blasphemy to suppose. We are therefore deeply interested to find out, if we can, what it was that our Saviour really thought, said, and did, in the case; and for what purpose.

It is readily acknowledged, that his history (in which alone his laws are contained) does not dwell copiously on the duties of sovereigns and subjects. This appearance of inattention, we may be assured, was not permitted without design: nor, in fact, is our duty on this point (any more than it is in others) the less forcibly inculcated by our having been left to find out the precept from his practice. On one point, however, of great moment in this discussion, the gospel history, when properly understood, is full and decided; viz. that every thing our blessed Lord either said or did, pointedly tended to discourage the disturbing a settled government. Hence it is fair to infer the judgment of Jesus Christ to have been, that the most essential duty of subjects with respect to government was (in the phraseology of a prophet) *to be quiet, and to sit still*. Yet, had he judged of questions of this nature as we do, he certainly did not

want motives to induce him to excite commotions in the government of Judea; and such motives too as (according to human reckoning) are highly meritorious and honourable. At the time when he was upon earth, his country groaned under an unjust and most oppressive bondage. It had just been subdued by a people, whose chief motive for over-running the world with their conquests was a lust of dominion: and it was as arbitrarily governed, as it had been iniquitously acquired. The Jews, it is true, were not then eminent, at least as a nation, for their virtues: but they were not chargeable with that "un-Roman spirit," as one of our orators expressed himself, or (to borrow the congenial phraseology of another) that "degeneracy of soul," which led them tamely to submit to their oppressors. A general opinion prevailed in the nation, that the expected Messiah would deliver them from this galling vassalage; that he was to be, not a spiritual, but a temporal, prince—a prince who should restore to Israel the supremacy, of which the Romans had deprived it—who should reign in all secular pomp and power in the throne of David—and, having subdued the rest of the world, make Jerusalem the seat of an universal monarchy. The very name given to him imports royalty and sovereignty: and he really was the legal heir to the crown of Judea.

In support of this assertion, it is to be observed, that the Jews had two ways of tracing their genealogies, by a kind of double descent; the one natural, the other legal. The natural descent was when a person,

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by natural generation, descends from another; the legal, when one not naturally descended from another, yet succeeded, as nearest of kin, to the inheritance. St. Luke deduces the natural line of Christ from David; and shews how Christ, by Nathan, is the son of David, according to the flesh, by natural descent: whereas St. Matthew deduces the legal line of Christ also from David, shewing how Christ, as Solomon's heir, and lawful king of the Jews, succeeded, as nearest of kin, to sit upon the throne of David his father: and the Evangelist is so satisfied with the legality of this genealogy, that he calls Christ "*the born king of the Jews,*" that is to say, the person who was their king by birth\*. The Jews themselves could name none of their nation who was nearer than he was. None of them ever produced any legal exception against him; and therefore, whilst a large party, convinced of the validity of his title to the throne by birth, wished to confirm it by election, and to make him a king, all that the friends of the Power who was in possession, or his enemies, could do to defeat his claim, was to get the Romans on their side, by artfully insinuating that the best of all titles was that which had been obtained by conquest: hence, their cry was, *We will have no king but Cæsar!*

Add to this—It is well known that in no instance whatever did our Saviour give greater offence to his countrymen than he did by not gratifying them in

\* See Matth. ch. ii. ver. 2.

their expectations of a temporal deliverance. For this opinion of his title to the throne was not taken up at random; nor only by a few persons, merely to serve some bye-ends of their own. The idea pervades his whole history. It was one of the chief grounds of the enmity of his countrymen towards him, and the only plausible pretence on which he could be arraigned. And, notwithstanding his repeated declarations that his *kingdom was not of this world*, yet it was on this account that at last he was *brought as a lamb to the slaughter*.

When it is asserted that Christianity made no alteration in the civil affairs of the world, the assertion should neither be made, nor understood, without some qualification. The injunction to *render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's*, is no doubt very comprehensive; implying that unless we are good Subjects, we cannot be good Christians: but then we are to *render unto Cæsar*, or the supreme magistrate, that obedience only to which God has given him a just claim: our paramount duty is to God, to whom we are to *render the things that are God's*. If, therefore, in the course of human affairs, a case should occur (and no doubt such cases do often occur) in which the performance of both these obligations becomes incompatible, we cannot long be at a loss in determining that it is our duty to obey God rather than men. The worship of idols, as well as sacrifices and auguries, certainly entered into, and made a part of, the civil policy of ancient Rome. Temples dedi-

cated to a variety of false deities were under the peculiar care of the Senate. The office of Pontifex Maximus, or High Priest, was annexed to the title of Emperor. Now, surely, it was the intention of the Founder of Christianity, and it is the natural tendency of it's doctrines, to produce some alteration in things of this sort. In Mahometan countries, a plurality of wives is allowed by law: in many countries still Pagan, the worship of images is enjoined by the State: in several parts of Africa, parents who are past labour are, by the laws of the land, exposed by their children to be torn in pieces by wild beasts: and even in so civilized a country as China, children are thus exposed by their parents, with the sanction and authority of the laws. Would Christianity endure such shocking outrages against all that is humane, moral, or pious, though supported by Government? It certainly would not: for the spirit of St. Paul, when he saw the city of Athens *wholly given to idolatry*, was so *stirred in him*, that, for disputing publicly with *certain philosophers of the Epicureans and of the Stoics*, they carried him unto Areopagus; where, far from shrinking from his duty, he openly arraigned all the people of Athens, of being *too superstitious*. This charge he founded on his having seen *an altar with this inscription, To the unknown God*; which yet was not set up contrary to law. Sundry improprieties, sanctioned by legal authority, were censured by Christ himself. Was it not by virtue of his regal power that, as *one having authority*, he cast the buyers and sellers out of the

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the temple ; who yet were there, and pursuing their usual callings, with the public permission ? Still, though they certainly were not restrained by any idea that all interference with the civil affairs of the world was contrary to Christianity, it no where appears, that either our Saviour, or any of his apostles, ever did interfere with the affairs of any government, or the administration of any government, otherwise than by submitting to them. Yet, let it not be said, that he who could have commanded *more than twelve legions of angels*, wanted power or means to have *resisted*, and with effect, that pusillanimous Roman governor, who, from the basest of all motives, gave sentence, that a person in whom he declared he found *no fault*, should be put to death, merely to gratify a senseless, malicious, and clamorous multitude. Let it not be said, that his pretensions to sovereignty were either romantic or dubious : *a great multitude* of his cotemporaries and countrymen, *being in number about five thousand*, thought so favourably of them, that they would have set him on their throne in that way by which alone we are now told authority over a free people can properly be obtained, viz. by the suffrages of the people. To assert his claim *de jure* against those who held it *de facto*, they would fain have *taken him by force* (that is, no doubt, in opposition to the Romans and their adherents) *to make him a king*. That he was not restrained from gratifying these natural wishes of so large a number of his impatient countrymen, by any apprehensions of his being evil-

spoken

spoken of, as *a pestilent fellow*, one who *perverted the people, forbidding to give tribute to Cæsar, and saying that he himself was king*, may very rationally be inferred from his having submitted to no less unmerited aspersions with invincible fortitude: and his yielding at last to the ignominy of the cross, proves that he was not to be deterred from doing any thing which he knew would redound either to the glory of God, or the good of mankind, by the dread of any calumnies, or the terrors of any sufferings\*.

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\* This extreme reluctance of the Jews to pay tribute to any Foreign Power was sanctioned by their religion: for, in Deuteron. ch. xvii. ver. 15. they are expressly enjoined to choose a king *from among their brethren, and not a stranger*. It was natural, therefore, that they should regard the paying tribute to the Romans as a badge of slavery; and natural also, that they should very generally dislike the publicans, who were the persons appointed by the Romans to collect such tribute. Judas the Gaulonite, taking advantage of this national prepossession, with the avowed purpose of shaking off this yoke, excited an insurrection: and so numerous were his adherents, that even after they were crushed as a civil party, they seem to have existed as a religious sect, under the name of *Zealots*. Persons of this order appear to have acted as public censors, or as societies for the reformation of manners; and, as such, were sometimes called *The Just*. Of this order, it is probable, those persons were, whom the Chief Priests and Scribes employed to *watch and to take hold of the words* of our Saviour: and therefore the expression in St. Luke, ch. xx. ver. 20. *which should feign themselves just men*, would be more accurately translated, if rendered, who feigned themselves, or pretended to be, *the Just*; that is to say, of the order of *the Just*. Jesus Christ himself was accused of being of this order; because, as it was alleged, he *forbade the people to give tribute unto Cæsar*. To  
this

His constant discouragement, therefore, of a scheme so well calculated not only to promote his own elevation, but to emancipate his country (had he estimated either worldly grandeur, or the condition of subjects under government, according to our ideas) would have been inconsistent with that love to mankind which he manifested in every other action of his life. The only rational conclusion, therefore, that the case will admit of, is, that he thought it would be better, both for Judea in particular, and for the world in general, that in the former case the people should not be distracted by a revolution, and in the latter that there should be no precedent to which revolutionists might appeal: his words were not meant to bear merely a local and circumscribed, but a general and extended application, when he directed his followers to *render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's*: his practice was conformable to this precept; and so would ours be, were we but practically convinced that *it is enough for the disciple to be as his master, and the servant as his lord*. As Christians, solicitous to tread in the steps in which our Saviour trod, the tribute of civil obedience is as much due to our civil rulers, even though they should happen to be invaders like the Romans, and though, like Herod, the ministers of government should chance to be

this circumstance of his being of that sect, which originated in his country of Galilee, the wife of Pilate may be supposed to have alluded, when she sent to her husband, saying, *Have thou nothing to do with that Just Man!*

oppressors,



oppressors, as the duty of religious obedience is a debt which we owe to *the King of kings, and Lord of lords*.

Nor let this be deemed a degrading and servile principle: it is the very reverse; and it is this it's superior dignity which proves it's celestial origin. For, whilst other doctrines and other systems distract the world with disputes and debates which admit of no decision, and of *wars and fightings* which are almost as endless as they are useless, it is the glory of Christianity to teach her votaries patiently to bear imperfections, inconveniences and evils in government, as in every thing else that is human. This patient acquiescence under some remediless evils is not more our duty than it is our interest: for, the only very intolerable grievance in government is, when men allow themselves to disturb and destroy the peace of the world, by vain attempts to render that perfect, which the laws of our nature have ordained to be imperfect. And there is more magnanimity, as well as more wisdom, in enduring some present and certain evils, than can be manifested by any projects of redress that are uncertain; but which, if they fail, may bring down irretrievable ruin on thousands of others, as well as on ourselves: since to suffer nobly indicates more greatness of mind than can be shewn even by acting valiantly. Wise men, therefore, in the words of a noted philosopher\*, will “rather choose to brook with patience some incon-

\* Hobbes.

conveniences under government (because human affairs cannot possibly be without some) than self-opinionatedly disturb the quiet of the public. And, weighing the justice of those things you are about, not by the persuasion and advice of private men, but by the laws of the realm, you will no longer suffer ambitious men, through the streams of your blood, to wade to their own power ; but esteem it better to enjoy yourselves in the present state, though perhaps not the best, than, by waging war, endeavour to procure a reformation in another age, yourselves “ in the meanwhile either killed, or consumed with age.”

This long enquiry concerning the divine origin and authority of government might perhaps have been deemed rather curious than useful, were it not of acknowledged moment, that some dangerous inferences which are usually drawn from the contrary opinion should be obviated. One of these dangerous inferences it seems to have been the aim of the sermon now before me to inculcate. Government being assumed to be a mere human ordinance, it is thence inferred, that “ rulers are the servants of the public :” and, if they be, no doubt it necessarily follows, that they may (in the coarse phrase of the times) be cashiered or continued in pay, be revered or resisted, according to the mere whim or caprice of those over whom they are appointed to rule. Hence the author of this sermon also takes occasion to enter his protest against “ passive obedience and non-resistance.”

It really is a striking feature in our national history, that, ever since the Revolution, hardly any person of any note has preached or published a sermon, into which it was possible to drag this topic, without declaring against this doctrine. It seems to have been made a kind of criterion or test of principle, and the watch-word of a party. For, it cannot well be said, that the circumstances of the times, or the temper of men's minds, either lately have been, or now are, such as particularly to call for these studied and repeated protestations. What is not less remarkable is, that whilst the right of resistance has thus incessantly been delivered from the pulpit, insisted on by orators, and inculcated by statesmen, the contrary position is still (I believe) the dictate of religion, and certainly the doctrine of the established Church, and still also the law of the land.

You are not now to learn my mind on this point. As, however, the subject has again been forced on me, let me be permitted again to obviate, if I can, some fresh misrepresentations, and again to correct some new mistakes.

All government, whether lodged in one or in many, is, in it's nature, absolute and irresistible. It is not within the competency even of the supreme power to limit itself; because such limitation can emanate only from a superior. For any government to make itself irresistible, and to cease to be absolute, it must cease to be supreme; which is but saying, in other words, that it must dissolve itself, or be



destroyed. If, then, to resist government be to destroy it, every man who is a subject must necessarily owe to the government under which he lives an obedience either active or passive: active, where the duty enjoined may be performed without offending God; and passive, (that is to say, patiently to submit to the penalties annexed to disobedience,) where that which is commanded by man is forbidden by God. No government upon earth can rightfully compel any one of it's subjects to an active compliance with any thing that is, or that appears to his conscience to be, inconsistent with, or contradictory to, the known laws of God: because every man is under a prior and superior obligation to *obey God in all things*. When such cases of incompatible demands of duty occur, every well-informed person knows what he is to do; and every well-principled person will do what he ought, viz. he will submit to the ordinances of God, rather than comply with the commandments of men. In thus acting he cannot err - and this alone is "passive obedience;" which I entreat you to observe is so far from being "unlimited obedience," (as it's enemies wilfully persist to miscall it,) that it is the direct contrary. Resolute not to disobey God, a man of good principles determines, in case of competition, as the lesser evil, to disobey man: but he knows that he should also disobey God, were he not, at the same time, patiently to submit to any penalties incurred by his disobedience to man.

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With the fancies or the follies of the injudicious defenders of this doctrine, who, in the heat of controversy, have argued for the exclusive irresistibility of kings, merely in their personal capacity, I have no concern. Such arguments are now to be met with only in the answers of those equally injudicious, but less candid, opposers of the doctrine, who (as though there were any gallantry in taking a fortress that is no longer defended) persist to combat a phantom which, now at least, may be said to be of their own creating. In the present state of things, when a resistance is recommended, it must be, not against the king alone, but against the laws of the land. To encourage undistinguishing multitudes, by the vague term of resistance, to oppose all such laws as happen not to be agreeable to certain individuals, is neither more nor less than, by a regular plan, to attempt the subversion of the government: and I am not sure but that such attacks are more dangerous to free than to absolute governments.

Even the warmest advocates for resistance acknowledge, that, like civil liberty, the term is incapable of any accurate definition\*. Particular cases of injury and oppression

\* The Marquis of Halifax confesses, that the right of resistance, which yet he contends is the life and soul of our Constitution, cannot be defined :

..... "It is," he says, "an *hidden power* in the Constitution, which would be lost if it were defined: a certain *mystery*, by virtue of which a nation may, at some critical times, be secured

oppression are imagined : on which arguments are founded, to shew that mankind must be determined and governed, not by any known and fixed laws, but “ by a law antecedent and paramount to all positive laws of men ; ” “ by their natural sense and feelings.” These unwritten, invisible, and undefinable “ antecedent laws ; ” this indescribable “ natural sense and feelings ; ” these “ hidden powers “ and mysteries ” in our Constitution, are points too refined and too subtle for argument. Indeed it can be to little purpose to argue, either on resistance or on any other subject, with men who are so weak as to declaim, when it is incumbent on them to reason.

Without any encouragement, mankind, alas ! are, of themselves, far too *prone to be presumptuous and self-willed* ; always disposed and ready to *despise dominion*, and to *speak evil of dignities*. There is, says a learned writer \*, such a “ witchcraft in rebellion, as to tempt men to be rebels, even though they are sure “ to be damned for it.” What dreadful confusions and calamities must have been occasioned in the world, had such strong and dangerous natural propensities been directly encouraged by any positive law ! It was surely, then, merciful and wise in the Almighty Ruler of the world, to impose on his crea-

“ from ruin ; but then it must be kept a *mystery*. It is rendered “ useless when touched by unskilful hands : and no people ever had “ or deserved to have that power, which was so unwary as to anticipate their claim to it.”

\* Dean Sherlock, in his Case of Resistance.



tures the general law of obedience without any exceptions. A non-resisting spirit never yet made any man a bad subject. And if men of such mild and yielding tempers have shewn less ardour, than many others do, in the pursuit of that liberty which makes so conspicuous a figure in the effusions of orators and poets, it can be only for this reason, that they think it is precisely that kind of liberty which has so often set the world in an uproar, and that therefore it would be better for the world if it were never more heard of\*. If they are mistaken, their mistakes are at least harmless: and there is much justice,

as

\* To men of plain sense, who (having no party purposes to serve) in any controverted question are anxious only to find the truth, it is wearisome to have, instead of a fair attempt to illustrate or clear up any of the great difficulties which embarrass, and must for ever embarrass, the subject of government, in all political discussions, this one unvaried topic of declamation for ever dinning in their ears. But it is particularly irksome to find such stale and thread-bare sophistry adopted and brought forward by so elegant and classical a writer as Lord Lyttelton.

In his first Dialogue of the Dead, he makes Hampden say, "It is  
 " a disgrace to our Church to have taken up such opinions; and I  
 " will venture to prophesy, that our Clergy must in future times  
 " renounce them, or they will be turned against them by those who  
 " mean their destruction. Suppose a Popish king on the throne:  
 " will the Clergy then adhere to passive obedience and non-resist-  
 " ance? If they do, they deliver up their religion to Rome; if they  
 " do not, their practice will confute their own doctrines."

By having taken no care to refute these sentiments; and by the artful compliment thus paid, at the expence of their predecessors, to the Clergy of his day, who, he was well aware, had pretty generally renounced what he affected to prophesy they would re-

as well as great good sense, in Bishop Hall's remark, that "some quiet errors are better than some unruly truths."

When,

nounce, it is too evident this noble author was not unwilling to have them regarded as his own.

There must be a total subversion of every thing that relates to our present Constitution, before we can again have a Popish king on the throne. But, should the Almighty (as a punishment for our great sin in not being sufficiently thankful for the blessing of having long had our throne filled by a mild and patriotic race of Protestant kings) see fit once more to permit a Popish monarch to sit on the throne, God forbid the Clergy should not *adhere* to doctrines enjoined by the law of the land, by the authority of their Church, and by the word of God! Had the noble historian forgotten, or did he only affect to forget, what part the Clergy of the Church of England did in general take when (themselves being Protestants) there actually was a Popish king upon the throne? The seven bishops whom James the Second committed to the Tower, and whom King William deprived for not renouncing King James, did, in neither of their opposite trials, "renounce the doctrines of passive obedience and non-resistance:" yet neither "did they deliver up their religion to Rome, nor confute their own doctrines by their own practice." So far from this, no one circumstance contributed so much to defeat the mad purpose of this bigoted monarch to introduce Popery into the kingdom, as the objections made to it by these persecuted bishops: and unless the principle of resistance may be promoted by an exemplary recommendation of non-resistance, their doctrines were not confuted by their practice. The conduct of these memorable men, on this memorable occasion, is not only a very satisfactory illustration of the true principles of this much misrepresented doctrine, but a complete vindication of it.

Had he been so disposed, Lord Lyttelton might have seen a cloud of witnesses in favour of these exploded doctrines among our older divines.

When, not long since, a noted patriot \* declared, in his place in Parliament, that he knew no difference between a revolution and a rebellion, excepting that in the former an attempt to alter the form of government succeeded, and in the latter it did not, the sentiment was objected to as licentious and seditious. Yet, on the principles of the advocates of resistance, he said no more than he might easily have defended: nor am I sure but that (notwithstanding the pains which the public men of that period took to guard against such an inference, in their debates on the word *abdication*) on these principles the promoters of the revolution itself, emphatically so called, must submit to the imputation of having effected it by resistance. It was clearly a successful revolution. If, then, this was the case as to the revolution, how, it may be asked, did it differ, in point of principle, either from the grand rebellion that preceded it, or either of the subsequent rebellions for the purpose of restoring the abdicated

divines. There is a very interesting catalogue of them, together with extracts evincing what their sentiments on this point were, in the history of Sacheverell's trial. He might also have seen, and he is inexcusable if he did not see (and perhaps still more inexcusable if, having seen, he did not learn more from) a most masterly Sermon on Passive Obedience, by Bishop Berkley. I hope I shall neither be regarded as dictatorial, nor unreasonable, in expressing an earnest wish, that no one may hereafter presume to shoot these random arrows against this venerable doctrine, till he has read and considered, and is also able to answer, this Discourse by this eminent Prelate.

\* Mr. Wilkes.



family? and how, on the same principles, can we condemn the murder of the father, and vindicate the expulsion of the son?—Mr. Locke, like many inferior writers, when defending resistance, falls into inconsistencies, and is at variance with himself. “Rebellion “being,” as he says, “an opposition not to persons, “but to authority, which is founded only in the “constitution and laws of the government, those, “whoever they be, who by force break through, and “by force justify their violation of them, are truly “and properly rebels.” To this argument no one can object: but it should be attended to, that, in political consideration, it is hardly possible to dissociate the ideas of authority in the abstract from persons vested with authority. To resist a person legally vested with authority, is, I conceive, to all intents and purposes, the same thing as to resist authority. Nothing, but its success, could have rescued the revolution from this foul imputation, had it not been for the abdication. Accordingly this great event has always hung like a mill-stone on the necks of those who must protest against rebellions; whilst yet their system of politics requires that they should approve of resistance, and the revolution.

The resistance which your political counsellors urge you to practise, (and which no doubt was intended to be justified by the sermon which I have now been compelled to notice,) is not a resistance exerted only against the persons invested with the supreme power either legislative or executive, but  
clearly

clearly and literally against *authority*. Nay, if I at all understand the following declaration made by those who profess that they are the disciples of Mr. Locke, you are encouraged to resist not only all authority over us as it now exists, but any and all that it is possible to constitute. “Can men who exercise their reason believe, that the Divine Author of our existence intended a part of the human race to hold an absolute property in, and an unbounded power over, others marked out by his infinite wisdom and goodness as the objects of a legal domination never rightfully resistible, however severe and oppressive?” It might be hazardous, perhaps, for me, even under the shelter of a Scripture phrase, to call these words *great swelling words*; because they are congressional words. That they have excited a very general panic, and many apprehensions of a real impending slavery, is no more than might have been expected in a country where there is literally “absolute property in, and unbounded power over, human beings.” How far this was intended, I presume not to judge. But, involved and obscure as the language (in which these extraordinary sentiments are couched) must be confessed to be, the declaration certainly points at all government: and its full meaning amounts to a denial of that just supremacy which “the Divine Author of our existence” has beyond all question given to “one part of the human race” to hold over another. Without some paramount and irresistible power, there can be no government. In our

Constitution, this supremacy is vested in the King and the Parliament; and, subordinate to them, in our Provincial Legislatures. If you were now released from this constitutional power, you must differ from all others "of the human race," if you did not soon find yourselves under a necessity of submitting to a power no less absolute, though vested in other persons, and a government differently constituted. And much does it import you to consider, whether those who are now so ready to promise to make *the grievous yoke of your fathers lighter*, may not themselves verify Rehoboam's assertion, and make you feel that *their little fingers are thicker than your father's loins*.

Be it (for the sake of argument) admitted, that the government under which till now you have lived happily, is, most unaccountably, all at once become *oppressive and severe*; did you, of yourselves, make the discovery? No: I affirm, without any apprehension of being contradicted, that you are acquainted with these oppressions only from the report of others. For what, then, (admitting you have a right to resist in any case,) are you now urged to resist and rise against those whom you have hitherto always regarded (and certainly not without reason) as your *nursing fathers and nursing mothers*? Often as you have already heard it repeated without expressing any disapprobation, I assure myself it will afford you no pleasure to be reminded, that it is on account of an insignificant duty on tea, imposed by the British Parliament; and which, for aught we know, may or  
may



may not be constitutionally imposed ; but which, we well know, two thirds of the people of America can never be called on to pay. Is it the part of an *understanding* people, of loyal subjects, or of good Christians, instantly to resist and rebel for a cause so trivial ? O my brethren, consult your own hearts, and follow your own judgments ! and learn not your “ measures “ of obedience ” from men who weakly or wickedly imagine there can be liberty unconnected with law—and whose aim it is to drive you on, step by step, to a resistance which will terminate, if it does not begin, in rebellion ! On all such trying occasions, learn the line of conduct which it is your duty and interest to observe, from our Constitution itself : which, in this particular, is a fair transcript or exemplification of the ordinance of God. Both the one and the other warn you against resistance : but you are not forbidden either to remonstrate or to petition. And can it be humiliating to any man, or any number of men, to ask, when we have but to *ask and it shall be given* ? Is prayer an abject duty ; or do men ever appear either so great, or so amiable, as when they are modest and humble ? However meanly this privilege of petitioning may be regarded by those who claim every thing as a right, they are challenged to shew an instance, in which it has failed, when it ought to have succeeded. If, however, our grievances, in any point of view, be of such moment as that other means of obtaining redress should be judged expedient, happily we enjoy those means. In a certain sense,

sense, some considerable portion of legislation is still in our own hands. We are supposed to have chosen "fit and able" persons to represent us in the great council of our country : and they only can constitutionally interfere either to obtain the enacting of what is right, or the repeal of what is wrong \*. If we, and

\* "Our Assemblies are the true, proper, legal guardians of our rights, privileges, and liberties. If any laws of the British Parliament are thought oppressive ; or if, in the administration of the British government, any unnecessary or unreasonable burthen be laid upon us, they are the proper persons to seek for redress, and they are the most likely to succeed. They have the legal and constitutional means in their hands. They are the *real*, not the *pretended*, representatives of the people. They are bodies known and acknowledged by the public laws of the empire. Their representations will be attended to, and their remonstrances heard."

—See "A View of the Controversy between Great Britain and her Colonies, p. 25, by A. W. Farmer ;" that is, by the late Bishop Seabury of Connecticut.

The fate of the excellent author of this well-written piece, and several others of not inferior merit under the same signature, might well discourage any man who attempts to serve the public, if animated only by the hopes of temporal rewards. When a missionary in the service of the Society for propagating the Gospel in Foreign Parts, whilst the revolt was still in it's infancy, he wrote several seasonable pieces, adapted to the capacities of the people, under the assumed character of a Farmer. They were generally acknowledged to have done much good. But, being attributed to another Gentleman, he alone derived any personal advantage from them : for, to him the British government granted an handsome pension, whilst the real Author never received a farthing. All the return that all his exertions procured for him, was imprisonment, persecution, and exile. By this country he was neglected and abandoned ; and by that which gave him birth, disowned : though a man of such transcendent

and our fellow-subjects, have been conscientiously faithful in the discharge of our duty, we can have no reason to doubt that our delegates will be equally faithful in the discharge of theirs. Our Provincial Assemblies, it is true, are but one part of our Colonial Legislature: they form, however, that part which is the most efficient. If the present general topic of complaint be, in their estimation, well founded, and

scendent abilities as would have been an ornament and a blessing to any country that had seen fit to patronize him. At length, thankful to be forgiven, he was permitted to return to his native country, where, as the bishop of Connecticut, he was supported by an humble eleemosynary pittance contributed by a few private friends in England; and, in February 1796, died as unnoticed as he had lived. Farewell, poor Seabury!—however neglected in life, there still lives one at least who knew thy worth, and honours thy memory!

“ His saltem accumulem donis, & fungar inani

“ Munere——”

See an Account of his Consecration in Scotland, in Mr. Skinner's very valuable Ecclesiastical History of Scotland, vol. ii. p. 683. See also the Obituary of the Gentleman's Magazine, p. 442, for May 1797.

Before the troubles, the University of Oxford was pleased to confer on him the honorary degree of D. D.; and in 1793 he published, at New York, two volumes of Discourses, which are such as might have brought credit to any Prelate in any age and in any country. Books of any kind, however, (and, perhaps, Sermons least of all,) not being in much demand in America, he wished to have had them republished in England; and for that purpose furnished the Author of this Volume with six more Discourses, in MS. to be added to them. But, such is the obscurity, or possibly the unpopularity, of a man of unquestionable learning and piety, that no Bookseller has yet ventured to undertake the work.

a real



a real and great grievance, what reason have you to imagine that all the Assemblies on the Continent will not concur and be unanimous in so representing it? And if they should all concur so to represent it, it is hardly within the reach of supposition that all due attention will not be paid to their united remonstrances. So many and such large concessions have often been made, at the instance only of individual Assemblies, that we are warranted in relying, that nothing which is reasonable and proper will ever be withheld from us, provided only it be asked for with decency, and that we do not previously forfeit our title to attention by becoming refractory and rebellious.

Let it be supposed, however, that even the worst may happen, which can happen; that our remonstrances are disregarded, our petitions rejected, and our grievances unredressed: what, you will naturally ask—what, in such a case, would I advise you to do?—Advice, alas! is all I have to give; which, however, though you may condescend to ask and to regard it, will neither be asked, nor accepted, by those who alone can give it great effect: Yet, circumscribed as our sphere of influence is, we are not wholly without influence; and therefore, even in our humble department, we have some duties to perform. To your question, therefore, I hesitate not to answer, that I wish and advise you to act the part of reasonable men, and of Christians. You will be pleased to observe, however, that I am far from thinking that

your virtue will ever be brought to so severe a test and trial. The question, I am aware, was an ensnaring one, suggested to you by those who are as little solicitous about your peace, as they are for my safety : the answer which, in condescension to your wishes, I have given to it, is direct and plain ; and not more applicable to you, than it is to all the people of America. If you think the duty of threepence a pound upon tea, laid on by the British Parliament, a grievance, it is your duty to instruct your members to take all the constitutional means in their power to obtain redress : if those means fail of success, you cannot but be sorry and grieved ; but you will better bear your disappointment, by being able to reflect that it was not owing to any misconduct of your own. And, what is the whole history of human life, public or private, but a series of disappointments ? It might be hoped that Christians would not think it grievous to be doomed to submit to disappointments and calamities, as their Master submitted, even if they were as innocent. His disciples and first followers shrunk from no trials nor dangers \*. Treading in the steps of him who, *when he was reviled, blessed, and when he was persecuted, suffered it*, they willingly laid down their lives, rather than resist some of the worst tyrants that ever disgraced the annals of history. Those persons

\* “ Humanity cannot be degraded by humiliation. It is its very character to submit to such things. There is a consanguinity between benevolence and humility. They are virtues of the same stock.” — Burke’s Two Letters, 1796, p. 27.

are as little acquainted with general history, as they are with the particular doctrines of Christianity, who represent such submission as abject and servile. I affirm, with great authority, that “there can be no better way of asserting the people’s lawful rights, than the disowning unlawful commands, by thus patiently suffering.” When this doctrine was more generally embraced, our holy religion gained as much by submission, as it is now in a fair way of losing for want of it.

Having, then, my brethren, thus long been *tossed to and fro* in a wearisome circle of *uncertain traditions*, or in speculations and projects still more uncertain, concerning government, what better can you do than, following the Apostle’s advice, *to submit yourselves to every ordinance of man, for the Lord’s sake; whether it be to the King as supreme, or unto GOVERNORS, as unto them that are SENT by him for the punishment of evil-doers, and for the praise of them that do well?* For, so is the will of God, that with well-doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men: as free, and not using your liberty for a cloke of maliciousness, but as the servants of God. Honour all men: love the brotherhood: fear God: honour the king.



## DISCOURSE XIII.

## A FAREWELL SERMON\*.

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NEHEMIAH, ch. vi. ver. 10, 11.

*Afterward I came unto the house of Shemaiah, the son of Delaiah, the son of Mehetabeel, who was shut up: and he said, Let us meet together in the house of God, within the temple, and let us shut the doors of the temple; for they will come to slay thee, yea in the night will they come to slay thee. And I said, Should such a man as I flee? and who is there that, being as I am, would go into the temple to save his life? I will not go in.*

THIS book might, with great propriety, be called the Patriot's Pattern. It contains the history of a great and good man promoting, with inflexible constancy, the true interests of his country, *through good report, and through evil report*. Never was there a fairer example of holy resolution; nor was there ever

\* Preached at the Lower Church in the Parish of Queen Anne, in Maryland, in 1775.

a time when such an one could, with more advantages than at present, be proposed to your imitation.

It's suitableness to our circumstances at this juncture recommended it to me as a fit subject for a Discourse on a day set apart, as we were given to understand, for fasting and prayer. Accordingly, supposing it to be impossible that any exception could be taken to a parallel fairly drawn from the Scriptures, I had prepared for that day most of those observations which I hope now to be permitted to deliver. Why, in my own pulpit, I was prevented from preaching to you what, in this solemn place, I call God to witness I had, to the best of my judgment, intended for your edification and your comfort—or why I was suffered to be treated with such unmerited insult and indignity as I believe has seldom been experienced by persons of my calling in any civilized and Christian country—are questions highly worthy both of your and my most serious consideration; but which, for the present, I wave. If I am so happy as to be favoured with your indulgence, I may perhaps briefly touch on them at the close of my Discourse.

You are now to judge (and I pray you to do so without favour or affection!) whether my Sermon does really contain any doctrines unworthy of a Christian minister to teach, or of a Christian congregation to hear; as has been asserted by those rude men who, with as little respect to decorum and good manners, as to religion and piety, occasioned the uproar last Thursday. My *desire and prayer* was, and is, to dis-

suade

suade and deter, if haply I may, those of a more forward and leading spirit among you, from worrying and persecuting such of their brethren as give offence, not against the laws either of God or man, but against the decrees of persons invested with no constitutional jurisdiction over any of us. It is not so much the propriety of the thing enjoined to which we object, as the incompetency and want of authority of the persons enjoining it.

After this particular application to those by whom the wrong is done, my aim was to suggest to those of more quiet spirits, who are the objects of these wrongs, some suitable *words of comfort*, such as may support them under their impending trial.

Whilst therefore I endeavour to discharge my duty towards you with such fidelity and zeal as, whatever the danger may be, you have a right to expect from your minister, I entreat only to be heard with that patience which it is one of the chief objects of my Discourse to recommend. If to this another request might yet be added, it should be, that, in this and all other instances of the kind, ye will be just to yourselves, and assert your undoubted privilege of being directed only by your own judgments—undictated to, and uncontrolled by, men who are your superiors only in confidence and self-sufficiency.

Before I address myself to the two very different descriptions of persons just mentioned, it may be proper to take a more immediate view of the character



of Nehemiah, and the memorable circumstances recorded of him in this book.

This eminent personage was governor of Jerusalem, having received his appointment from Artaxerxes—that *higher power* by whom the people of God, for the correction of their sins, were at this period of their history held in bondage. An exalted station, and the smiles of the great, have often proved fatal to that virtue which might have resisted all the temptations incident to an humbler sphere of life. But it is only to the ordinary attainments of virtue that elevated rank can be fatal: to real and great worth the sunshine of prosperity, and the storms of adversity, are equally without danger. Before he was made a governor, Nehemiah had been cup-bearer, and a favourite, under the king of Persia: yet still, even in that high station, *he was a good man, and one that feared God.* Hearing, in the palace of Shushan, how *the remnant of the captivity that were left in the province were in great affliction and reproach, he sat down and wept, and mourned certain days, and fasted and prayed before the God of heaven.* Degenerate and corrupted as the world is, piety towards God, and humanity and benevolence to our fellow-creatures, are graces which will every where command the respect of mankind. With these recommendations, and after so very proper a preparation, Nehemiah approached the king with a petition to be permitted to return to his native country; to rebuild the temple,

ple, repair the walls of the city, restore the religion of his fathers, and re-establish the priests, according to their several orders and stations, in the service of God. An attention to religion so sincere and ardent, and undebaſed with any alloy of ſuperſtition—and a patriotiſm ſo earneſt, and at the ſame time not more generous than it was prudent—could not fail to engage the notice and the regards even of his Gentile maſter. *It pleaſed the king to grant him his requeſt, according to the good hand of his God upon him.*

It does not ſeem neceſſary to detain you with a recital of the new governor's journey to Jeruſalem, and the manner of his opening his commiſſion. You will read the account with pleaſure in your Bibles; and I ſhould be loth to diſfigure it's exquiſite ſimplicity and dignity, by putting it into modern language. A great majority of the prieſts, rulers, nobles, and Jews, readily and chearfully concurred with him in promoting his patriotic purpoſes; whiſt others, as if offended by that brightneſs which eclipsed their feebler luſtre, *laughed him to ſcorn, and deſpiſed him.* The chief of theſe were, *Sanballat the Horonite*, and *Tobiah (the ſervant) the Ammonite*, and *Geshem the Arabian*; petty princes, it is probable, in ſome of the adjacent countries; one of whom alſo, it may be obſerved, had been *a ſervant*. If (as it is not unnatural to ſuppoſe might be the caſe) they were like the people over whom they preſided, they muſt have been, as commentators inform us, heathens; “a ſort

“ of mixed breed, out of the scum of many nations\*.”

This part of the history seems to claim your especial notice, from it's conveying instruction respecting a point to which writers do not perhaps very commonly advert. From the very little that appears to be said of the friends of the old constitution, who were the adherents to Nehemiah, it might be imagined, that they were neither numerous, nor of much note. And yet, by the list that is given of them in the 3d chapter, and the works which, by acting in concert, they performed, it is certain they neither were few, nor feeble. The incident affords this pleasing and useful inference to the friends of piety and their country, that if they will but firmly resist the artifices

\* Sanballat, as appears from Josephus (lib. xi. cap. 8.) was at this time governor of Samaria. Manasses, the brother of Jaddus the high-priest, and a colleague with him in the office, had married the daughter of Sanballat; who, actuated by his religious prejudices, as well as stimulated by other and less worthy motives, was the inveterate enemy of Nehemiah and the true Jews. This Manasses, refusing to put away his wife, and being on that account prohibited from exercising the priest's office at Jerusalem, retired to Samaria; and there, with the encouragement and help of his father-in-law, built a temple on Mount Gerizim. Of this temple he was made the high-priest; and was also set up as totally independent of, and every way equal to, the high-priest at Jerusalem. This fresh schism confirmed the enmity between the two nations, which was first begun by the revolt of Jeroboam: an enmity that appears to have continued with unabating rancour, at least to the times of our Saviour, when, we are expressly assured, that *the Jews had no dealings with the Samaritans.*

and



and violences of their opponents by united and compacted strength, they will in general find, that neither are their adversaries so formidable, nor themselves so defenceless, as they are too often apprehended to be. The children of misrule will too probably long continue, like the assailants of Nehemiah, to try the fortitude of the friends of order, sometimes by tauntingly deriding the hopelessness of their resistance—if *a fox but go up, he shall break down your wall*; and sometimes by endeavouring to overawe them with prognostications of approaching danger and destruction—*from all places your enemies will be upon you*:—it is all in vain; *they mock at fear, and are not affrighted*. Instructed by Nehemiah, they put their whole trust and confidence in the *mercies of God*; and therefore fearlessly, wisely, and piously answer, with him, *The God of heaven, he will prosper us*.

The perseverance of bad men, engaged in a bad cause, is almost proverbial. Contrary to all the common rules of proceeding, a defeat (like the fabled giant of antiquity, who, on being thrown to the ground, was supposed to rise from it with recruited strength) with them seems to operate as an encouragement. Conscious of this, and justly distrustful of his own unaided powers, Nehemiah neglected not to pray unto God to *strengthen his hands*. Those only who, like him, are at once humble and firm, may presume to approach the throne of grace with reverent boldness; for, *the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open to their prayers*. And surely never man

had more reason, than Nehemiah had, to say, *If the Lord had not been on my side when men rose up against me, they had swallowed me up quick.* Had it not been for the supernatural aid which he received, he must have fallen into some of those many deep-laid snares which his enemies were perpetually plotting against him and his party : *They shall not know, said they, neither see, till we come in the midst of them and slay them,*

This deep-laid plan of destruction, which was to be accomplished only by treachery, fixes a stamp of indelible infamy on the characters of these men. The conduct of Nehemiah, however blame-worthy in their eyes, was yet, by their own confession, open and manly. If, therefore, it *exceedingly grieved them,* as no doubt it did, to have *a man come in* among them, who really did what they only pretended to do, i. e. who truly fought *the welfare of Israel*, it would surely have become them to oppose him like brave men, and not like dark assassins. But, they were cruel, because they were cowards; and they were cowards, because they were wicked. It is *the righteous only who are bold as a lion*; whilst *wickedness, condemned,* is always *very timorous.*

Strong in the strength of God, Nehemiah was *stedfast and unmoveable.* Threatenings and flatteries were equally unavailing to induce him to *remove his integrity from him.* It is with equal sorrow and shame I go on to relate, that, alas ! this was not the case with some of his followers. Attending more to what  
 seemed

seemed expedient, than to what they should have known was their duty, many swallowed the bait that was so artfully thrown out to lure them to their destruction. They were discouraged and overawed by the imputation that, in siding with Nehemiah, they were *inimical* to their country, and *in rebellion against their king*. Knowing, as they did, how groundless such imputations were, it is surprising they should in any degree regard them—and more especially as they were cast on them by men who, they also knew, neither loved their country, nor *honoured the king*. The blame of such men was their praise: they could have been hurt only by their panegyrics. But, their fears blinded their judgments: and this is the usual course of fear; which, as the elegant author of the Book of Wisdom finely expresses it, *is nothing but a betraying of succours*. It makes the danger which it is so anxious to shun: it is a good watchman, but a bad defender: it sees danger before it exists, and magnifies it when it does exist\*; thus defeating its own purposes, by giving occasion for more resolution in the very moment that it makes that resolution less. The thing which *I greatly feared*, says Job, *is come upon me; and that which I was afraid of is come unto me*. Man is enabled to encounter and vanquish danger only by fortitude: and that, with the fear of God, is effectual to *cast out all other fear*. *Wo be to*

\* . . . . “nec defuerunt qui fictis mentitisque terroribus vera pericula augerent.”—Plin. Epist. lib. vi. ep. 20.



*fearful hearts and faint hands !* It was the apprehension of their not being able to extirpate the Canaanites, which made the hearts of the wary spies of Israel to fail ; like Sampson, their strength went from them. And as it is no indifferent matter to be dispirited in the cause of God, it concerns every man to remember the declaration of the prophet, *He that fleeth from the fear, shall fall into the pit.*

A person tainted with an infectious disease, communicates the contagion wherever he goes, whether he will or no. It is not at all necessary to suppose, that all these Jews, who thus fell into the snare laid for them by their enemies, were the willing instruments of seduction. Disheartened themselves, it was natural for them to spread their fears. Aware of this, their new associates seem to have employed them, as the Carthaginian General, Hannibal, is said to have employed some oxen : he fastened bundles of hay to their horns, and then sent them into the Roman camp, where, driven on by their fears, they spread involuntary ruin. And, in such cases, mere weakness is almost as much to be dreaded as wickedness. Had these apostates really been determined to injure the man whom they wished to serve, they could not well have devised an expedient more certain to effect it than that which they took. *Ten times* did they come to him with an alarming tale, that assuredly he would be *way-laid and slain.*

Credulity, or that easiness of belief which assents to propositions on slight and insufficient evidence,

is the error of weak minds; whereas infidelity, it is to be feared, originates in such as are both weak and wicked. The man, whose uninformed mind has few or no ideas of it's own, is like a blank sheet of paper, which, though it may perhaps receive the fair characters of wisdom and truth, is liable also to be scrawled over by folly, or blotted by error. This, however, was not the character of the mind of Nehemiah. All the impression which those rumours and lies, which are the general forerunners of revolutions, though addressed alternately to his hopes and fears, made on him, was such only as it might be supposed they could and would make on a man who fears God, and fears none but God. Undaunted himself, he redoubled his diligence to *comfort and help the weak-hearted*: animating them *not to be afraid*, but to *remember the Lord, and to fight for their brethren, their sons, and their daughters, and their wives, and their houses*. This proper conduct had it's proper effect: *the counsel of their enemies came to nought*.

Baffled in this, the next stratagem of these dangerous men was such an one as it seemed impossible for any prudence, or any integrity, to escape. His bosom friend, who should have loved at all times, and whom the wise man calls *a brother born for adversity*, instead of *showing pity* to him when he was afflicted, basely *dug a pit* for him. This friend was a prophet: but it is too probable he put on the garb of sanctity and friendship only to enable him the more effectually to deceive. Affecting to think as Nehemiah thought,

thought, he pretended that he also was persecuted by their common adversaries, and was in danger of his life. *He shut himself up*—most probably in the temple, where the prophets usually had apartments : and, as it was common to prophesy by actions as well as by words, this pretended retreat was certainly a significant and expressive declaration of the necessity he wished Nehemiah to think there was that he also should *shut himself up*. In this safe asylum he officiously invited Nehemiah to take shelter ; urging him to do so by the most cogent of all arguments, viz. that, if he did not, *his adversaries would slay him—that very night they would slay him*. Noadiah the prophetess, and the rest of the prophets, were also either so unwise, or unworthy, or both, as to join in this unhallowed plot.

It is a strange feature in the character of weak men, that, having themselves once been seduced from their duty, it seems to afford them something like relief to seduce others ; as if a disease could be cured by infecting another with it. It is possible that to sin in company, and with a multitude, may, in the public eye, shield the delinquents from some of that shame and scorn which are the lot of singular and eminent depravity ; but nothing can exempt any sinners from feeling the goads and stings of a *wounded spirit*. In the moments of private reflection, the consciousness of having been the occasion of another's falling must aggravate the pungency of their remorse. That men wholly abandoned to vice should seek to entice others



others into the same wretched state as themselves, is no more than may be expected of them ; it being their business, as well as their delight, to promote every thing that is bad, and to discountenance whatever is good. But that persons who really have no ill ends of their own to serve, should suffer themselves so easily, as they often do, to be made the tools of designing and wicked men, is almost as inconceivable as it is inexcusable. Sanballat and Tobiah had *conspired together* against their country : it imported them, therefore, at any rate to defeat, and if possible to ruin, Nehemiah it's fastest friend. For this purpose they *hired* Shemaiah to put in practice the base artifice, which has just been mentioned, *to make him afraid, and to do so, and to sin, that they might have matter for an evil report, that they might reproach him.* Had Shemaiah either been a good man, or the deed in which he was employed a good deed, he needed not to have been *hired* : and not all the wealth of all *the merchantmen and kings of Arabia* should have hired him to do what he knew to be base and wicked. But, what apology can be offered for *the prophets Noadiah, and the rest of the prophets* ? They had not *conspired together* against this upright man ; nor had they any premeditated design *to do him mischief.* Their apology is their reproach : the artful reports which their deceivers had *feigned out of their own hearts* had terrified them into some unworthy compliances ; and being ashamed of their want of discernment, and want of resolution, they meanly and foolishly

foolishly hoped to find some excuse for their own pusillanimity, by *putting* Nehemiah also *in fear*. It is thus that irresolute timid persons increase their danger, at the same time that they deprive themselves of the best means of withstanding it.

Nehemiah had now been their governor twelve years: and, in spite of opposition, had established a character of hospitality, disinterestedness, and the most unfulled integrity. This was too large a stake wantonly to risque by a rash throw, in a weak moment of inconsideration and timidity. Having hitherto *fed his people with a faithful band, and ruled them prudently with all his power*, no specious arguments could prevail with him, by a flattering condescension to the humours of a few, madly to endanger the best interests of them all. *Should such a man as I flee \*? said he: and who is there that being as I am would go into the temple to save his life? I will not go in.*

It is as if he had said, Providence has been pleased to make my station among you conspicuous. However lowly I think of my own attainments, and my own merits, I must not so rate the important character with which I am invested. The vicegerent of God—the man to whom he has delegated the government of his people, is as *a city set on an hill*. My example will be active, and produce effects whether I

\* “Terga dabo? et Turnum fugientem hæc terra videbit?”

“Uſque ad cone mori miſerum eſt?”——Æn. lib. xii. l. 645.

will or no. In my conduct, therefore, I am resolved that no man shall find a precedent for cowardice, or for basely deserting a good cause. Add to this, it would be wrong to form my judgment of the whole of this people, from that small portion of them connected with you and your abettors. On my request, *the one half*, with *the spear, the shield, the bow, and the habergeon*, are at this moment *defending their brethren who are at work*. What though *your strength be small*, and you *faint in the day of adversity*, their fortitude is founded on principle; and it is impossible that I should entertain a doubt either of their zeal or their fidelity. By the blessing of God, then, till they desert me, I will not desert them. Whither indeed shall I go? Listening to the surmises of frail and fearful men, shall I desert what I know to be my duty, in the hope only of obtaining what, after all, may not be for my interest? Our land is divided into parties; each eagerly pursuing ends as different from each other as the east is from the west. Which of these parties shall finally prevail, even the acutest reasoners are at a loss to conjecture\*. In such circumstances of extreme uncertainty, mere prudence should determine us all to choose and abide by that side which in our consciences we believe to be right. No longer then persuade me to trust in any child of man,

\* Lord Lyttelton observes, in one of his Dialogues of the Dead, that—"the most grievous misfortune that can befall a virtuous man, "is to be in such a state that he can hardly act so as to approve "his own conduct."



in whom there is no help : rather encourage me still to *trust in God*, who has hitherto marvellously prospered my undertakings, and who, I still believe, will, in his own good time, *deliver me out of all my fear, and cover with shame and dishonour those that seek to do me hurt.* Betide what will, *I will not flee.*

This was not the speculative resolution of a retired philosopher, contemplating danger at a distance. Nehemiah's danger was neither imaginary, small, nor remote. His adversaries were numerous and powerful. Besides *Sanballat and Tobiah, and Gessem, the Arabians, the Ammonites, and the Asbdodites*, had *conspired together* against him, in comparison with whom the Jews must have been *feeble*, even if they had been unanimous. In such circumstances he would probably have been set down as a rigid moralist, who should have blamed even Nehemiah, had he, to extricate himself, *turned aside* for a moment from the *straight paths* of wisdom to the crooked ways of artifice. The dilemma, however, does not appear to have embarrassed Nehemiah. He was persuaded that though prudence and integrity may sometimes seem to point different ways, they only seem to do so \*. When, therefore, he knew what as an honest man he ought to do, his determination was fixed. To a man who, trained up in the principles of true religion, is in the habit of thinking and acting only in such a manner as religion will warrant, none but virtuous

\* ..... " *Expedit vobis esse bonos.*" — Ter. Heaut. Act 2. Sc. 4.

expedients ever occur. It weighs little with him that, in thus acting, he may be exposed to difficulties and dangers, and to bitter persecution. Great actions are rarely performed without difficulty : and virtue can hardly be called virtue, till it has been tried and proved by some ordeals.

And now, after this copious detail of some of the most memorable incidents in the life of Nehemiah, where—it may fairly be asked—where does there appear any thing in it so reprehensible as (I do not say to justify, but) to excuse the unceasing persecution which he met with ? The literal import of the word *persecution* is the being made to suffer undeservedly : and therefore, though coercion, rigour and severity may sometimes perhaps be inflicted without blame, persecution never can. Addressing myself, then, according to the proposed plan of my Discourse, now more particularly to those persons in the community, who, either through passion and prejudice, or through mistaken principles of policy, pursue with such unrelenting rigour those of their brethren who cannot adopt or even approve of all their measures, I set out with observing, that for one party to persecute another, merely because of a difference of opinion, is a crime that is much aggravated by the reflection, that there is no temptation to the commission of it, but such as a generous mind must abhor. A good cause should disdain the aid of so unworthy an ally as Persecution : even a bad one is ultimately injured by her interference, since no man was ever

made a convert to any opinion by compulsion. There is a principle in our natures which revolts at the idea of being driven : and I believe it is no uncommon case to find men unconvinced even by good arguments, when they are dogmatically and arbitrarily urged. Conviction results only from arguments that will bear to be reflected and deliberated on : whereas to be violent and overbearing only makes men more tenacious of their preconceived opinions ; as trees are said to spread their roots, and take faster hold of the ground, by being planted in situations where they are much exposed to be shaken by strong blasts of wind. Such is the frame of the human mind ; such what Lord Bacon calls the *plies* it takes from education and a thousand other causes, that even wise and good men rarely think exactly alike on any speculative subject whatever. Large allowances should be made for the predilection we all naturally have for dogmas and doctrines with which our minds have been early imbued, and for the scantiness and uncertainty of all human knowledge, at which at last we arrive slowly, and not without much pains ; so that the instances are not few, in which when we think our judgments firmly settled and fixed, better information gives us reason wholly to reverse them : and hence it not unfrequently happens, that no two persons can differ more from each other, than a man at different periods of his life may differ from himself.

In some instances men's opinions seem to be involuntary, and, in some sense, independent even of them-



themselves. We can no more help viewing objects, as they are represented to us through the various mediums of our various tempers and capacities, than he who is placed in a valley can help his not seeing as far as his neighbour who is stationed on an hill. On all these accounts, it is as reasonable, as it is humane, to bear and forbear with one another. All that ill-judged rigour can do, is to make men seem to acquiesce, whether they really do or no, merely in the hope of being permitted to be safe: so that the cause which can stoop thus to gain profelytes, may, in a seeming friend, acquire a real foe. Admitting that the *counsels* and the opinions of those among us who are now so officiously proscribed, and held up to public odium, are as false as they are said to be, still they may safely be *let alone*; because, if the allegations of your Committees be well founded, they will assuredly *come to nought*. But if haply they should be found to be true, much does it concern those who direct these tribunals to remember, that though they may destroy those persons who maintain the truth, yet can they not finally destroy truth itself: in attempting it, they may find, to their cost, that they *fight against God*. Much also does it concern them to attend to the strong language of the prophet: "*Behold, all ye that kindle a fire, that compass yourselves about with sparks! walk in the light of your fire, and in the sparks that ye have kindled—This shall ye have of mine hand, ye shall lie down in sorrow* \*." It is as if he had

\* Isaiah, ch. l. ver. 11.

said, This, O ye wicked ! this is your day : you now seem to shine and to bask in the fire which ye have kindled ; whilst others, as innocent at least, if not as meritorious as you, are scorched by the fire that does but warm you. But, remember, that, for all this, God shall *call you to judgment* ; and it may yet be your lots also to *lie down in sorrow*.—How far the plea of ignorance, and a persuasion that by persecuting us they may do God service, may excuse them, it is fit I should leave to the great Searcher of hearts to determine. A blasphemer and a persecutor of some note did once, we know, verily think with himself, that he ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth, and to punish the saints in every synagogue. But, though he found mercy, and was miraculously converted to preach that faith which he once opposed, his erroneous conscience was far from justifying him. May our persecutors find equal mercy !

A more painful task now demands my attention. The second object of my Discourse was, to recommend to those of you who, like myself, may be so unfortunate as to incur the displeasure of the Committees, fortitude, patience and perseverance in times of trouble : and, if I am not overawed by the threatening aspect of that dark cloud which is gathering fast over our heads, you will soon have occasion for all the assistance which reason can suggest, and all the consolation which religion can administer.

But, first, let me warn you not to entertain either  
a wish,

a wish, or an hope, that you may be permitted to remain in a state of neutrality. The character of Titus Pomponius Atticus, who, during the convulsions occasioned by the contending parties of his age, had the address to avoid taking a decided part with either of them, has been held up by some writers as a model for imitation. But, I own, it has no charms for me. If he was sincere in his professions of neutrality, he must needs have been either a cold-hearted man, or of an insignificant character. If he was not sincere, if he acted his part thus ambiguously only that he might be safe which ever side should prevail, his duplicity was detestable. Nor, in that case, could he be said to be neutral. He took his part; and probably with more efficacy than he could have done by the most unequivocal avowal of his party. For, in such cases, not to be for a cause, is clearly to be against it. To choose, and, as far as we are able, to defend a cause which in our consciences we believe to be good, is not, properly speaking, a matter of choice, but of duty; and either through fear to shrink from our duty, or through any sinister views to perform it feebly, is a sin which, however small, from the commonness of the case, we may deem it, is to be dreaded and shunned more than the greatest danger.

Judging of what we have to expect by what many of us have already been made to feel, I foresee, alas! such *days of evil* awaiting us as may well make *men's hearts fail them for fear*. For, whilst I think it right to put you on your guard against exaggerating



danger, it is no less my duty to warn you not to fall into the opposite extreme, and to under-rate it. Whilst, then, the great fury of the storm is haply still at some distance, it may be useful to you to look at and contemplate it in it's worst possible form. Let no man be too confident of his firmness, whilst he is yet untried. It is no easy trial for a man, who is *at ease in his possessions*, to be driven from them; when, by some little compliances with the humour of the times, by *bowing himself down in the house of Rimmon*, he might possibly save both himself and his property from destruction. Nor, when multitudes are every where, with shouts of triumph, rushing eagerly into the broad paths of popularity, is it an easy task for solitary virtue to pursue the noiseless tenour of her course in the narrow way of duty. My heart seems to fail me when I attempt to apprise you, how many comforts ye may be called on to part with; what cruel *mockings, scourgings, bonds, and imprisonments* may await you; and how, like many of those of whom *the world was not worthy*, it may be your hard lot to *wander about in sheep-skins and goat-skins, in deserts and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth, destitute, afflicted, and tormented!* All that will then be left you, and, happily for you, all that even then ye will much want, will be that last refuge and privilege of the wretched over which tyrants have no power, tears and prayers: pray, therefore, continually, that your *patience and faith may endure in all your persecutions and tribulations.*

Thus

Thus prepared, ye shall fear no sufferings, those excepted which ye undergo for your sins. And so far from falling into despondency and despair, even when danger, as the prophet speaks, shall seem ready to *come in at the window*, ye will be resolute to part with every thing, and to suffer every thing, rather than not *bold fast your integrity*.

Passion and party may carry some men, of warm minds, great lengths, and make them endure much : but such holding out, and such endurance, are very different things from that calm but steady perseverance which a good man manifests in a good cause. His fortitude is founded on the broad basis of true religion ; and therefore, be the warfare never so terrible, he will *fight a good fight*, and, whatever the issue may be, he will be *more than conqueror*. His is not a blind zeal : he knows for what he contends ; and the better he understands it, the more determined he is to defend it ; because he does not think himself at liberty to relinquish, or abide by it, merely as, in point of prudence or policy, it may seem expedient to him to be firm, or to be yielding—to emulate the oak, or the willow.

A noble instance of that steady and firm temper, which I am now endeavouring to recommend, occurs in the apocryphal history of the father of the Maccabees. Antiochus, a successor of Alexander, *persuaded by some wicked men* of the Jews, had conquered Judea, and set up *altars, and groves, and chapels of idols ; to the end that the inhabitants might forget the law, and change all the ordinances*.

Shocked at such blasphemies, Mattathias exclaimed, *Who is me ! wherefore was I born to see this misery of my people ?* Uninfluenced by so virtuous an example, or overawed by the threats of those who compelled the people to revolt, or seduced by the flattering promises of many rewards, many of Israel conformed, and were gathered unto them. But neither threats nor promises could make any impression on Mattathias. *Though all the nations that are under the king's dominion,* said he, *fall away, every one, from the religion of their fathers ; yet will I, and my sons, and my brethren, walk in the covenant of our fathers. God forbid that we should forsake the law and the ordinances !* To this resolution he became a martyr : to live honourably was no longer in his power ; all that he could do, he did do : that was to die gloriously. Mark, I pray you, his dying sentiments, and last admonitory words to his sons and his brethren : *Let us all die in our innocency ; heaven and earth shall testify for us, that we are put to death wrongfully \**.

It

\* Dionysius of Halicarnassus has recorded a speech of Manius Valerius, who, whilst the State was distracted with the violence of Appius Claudius on the one hand, and the seditious harangues of the tribunes and populace on the other, happily for both sides was chosen dictator, and, by his temperate firmness, prevented a fatal breach.

“ Imagine not that I am capable of joining with them to deceive  
 “ you, or that I have concerted with them any criminal design  
 “ against you : for, if you entertain these thoughts of me, as if I  
 “ was the most deceitful of all men, treat me as you please ; but  
 “ believe what I say, and banish this suspicion from your minds,  
 “ Turn



It has always been, it still is, and too probably will for ever be, the lot of the faithful disciples of Christ to wear their master's badge. "And there should be no greater comfort to Christian persons, than to be made like unto Christ, by suffering patiently adversities and troubles." The consideration of the infinite good that is done in the world by the silent and unnoticed but powerful influence of a few solitary good examples, should animate us all not to *be weary in well-doing*. Nor should we *think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try us, as though some strange thing happened to us*. If any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed: but and if he suffer for righteousness sake, happy is he. It is his peculiar felicity to know with certainty, that, how great soever his troubles may be, his reward will be greater. *For, the sufferings of the present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed*. Be of good courage, then, and play the men: and, relying on

"Turn your anger from your friends to your enemies, who are coming with a design to take your city, to transform you from freemen to slaves; hastening to inflict every other severity on you, which mankind stands most in fear of. Receive them with alacrity, and shew them that the power of the Romans, though agitated with sedition, is superior to any other, when unanimous. —When you have taken revenge of your enemies, I myself undertake that the senate will reward you, both by composing these contests, and by granting every thing else you can reasonably desire of them. I desire, also, that my alacrity in exposing myself to danger may be your example, &c." —Spelman's Dionysius, vol. iii. p. 61,

the authority of an Apostle, encourage one another with the comfortable assurance, that *though you may be troubled, yet shall you not be distressed; though perplexed, yet not in despair; though persecuted, yet not forsaken; though cast down, yet not destroyed.* The part you have to act may be difficult, but it is not unimportant: for, it is peculiar to the way of duty to be plain, easy, and direct; whilst deviations from rectitude are circuitous, intricate and difficult: and they are so, because in morals, as in mathematics, the straightest line between two points is always the shortest. Your stations in life may be obscure; but your pious firmness shall now shed a lustre around them. The ways of the Almighty, in small instances as well as in great, are often beyond men's comprehension: he condescends, and not unfrequently, to make use of the humblest men as well as humblest means to effect his purposes. Who then shall presume to say, that, by *letting your light now shine before men*, you may not become *a light to lighten* the wavering, the unstable, and the revolting? and so, even in this dim and dark corner of the land, (to borrow the words of a martyr,) such a candle may be lighted up, as, by God's grace, shall never be put out.

After all, I am far from being sure that your greatest danger is likely to arise from your being persecuted. Many a man has borne up manfully under troubles, who has afterwards given way to the seductions of artifice, the allurements of solicitation, the hopes of favour, or the promises of reward. In each of these  
ways,

ways, and in every other way that art or malice can devise, ye may count confidently on your being tried. For, our Committees, Conventions, and Congresses, backed as they are by regiments, battalions and armies, are not likely to stop short, till they have overturned government, and destroyed or disgraced every man whose principles lead him to wish to preserve it. Such measures as they cannot carry by force, they will seek to accomplish by address. When the Egyptians were bent on the destruction of the Israelites, they were too politic to attempt it directly, and all at once. So strong a measure might have aroused and united their captives, and determined them to make a common cause of their deliverance : and as they were numerous, and had a good cause, by acting in concert, they might have proved too strong for their tyrants. The deeper scheme of their oppressors was thus announced : *Come on ! let us deal wisely with them.* Hence it was resolved, not immediately to banish or to imprison them, but to lay on them heavy burdens and oppressions ; that, by thus first weakening them and breaking their spirits, they might afterwards be more easily crushed and exterminated.

Sincerely do I wish it were not now necessary to crave your indulgence for a few minutes longer—it shall be but for a few—to speak of myself. If I am to credit some surmises, which have been kindly whispered in my ear, (and I am proud thus publicly to acknowledge that it is to a man whose political tenets are the opposite of mine that I owe this information,

communi-



communicated no doubt from motives of good-will and humanity,) that, unless I will forbear to pray for the King, you are to hear me neither pray nor preach any longer. No intimation could possibly have been less welcome to me. Distressing, however, as the dilemma confessedly is, it is not one that either requires or will admit of a moment's hesitation. Entertaining all due respect for my ordination vows, I am firm in my resolution, whilst I pray in public at all, to conform to the unmutilated Liturgy of my Church: and, reverencing the injunction of an Apostle, I will continue to *pray for the King and all that are in authority under him*; and I will do so, not only because I am so commanded, but that, as the Apostle adds, we may continue to *lead quiet and peaceable lives in all godliness and honesty*. Inclination, as well as duty, confirms me in this purpose. *As long as I live*, therefore; yea, whilst *I have my being*, will I, with Zadok the priest, and Nathan the prophet, proclaim, *God save the King!*

If, however, this is to be my valedictory sermon, let me at least have the consolation to reflect, that, as my words will assuredly not come *out of feigned lips*, they may sink deep into your hearts, and in some degree guide and comfort you when you can no longer listen to any exhortations of mine. Last words are generally regarded as words of importance: and there is no man, how much soever he may heretofore have been neglected, who is not listened to with attention, when it is known that he is to speak no more.

It

It was my misfortune to be first known to you in these unsettled times. Pains were taken to prejudice you against me, even before you saw me. Many of you must remember, as I for ever shall, how, on my coming to take possession of my living, *the doors were shut*; and I was, for some time, forcibly kept out of the church, to which I had every equitable as well as every legal claim; nor can you have forgotten how near I was, on that memorable day, experiencing the fate of St. Stephen. The end aimed at by such violence, which then at least could not have been merited, is now obvious. If you listened to my doctrines, you could no longer be the disciples of the Sanballats and Tobiahs, who have at length, step by step, led you to the very brink of rebellion. Insignificant therefore as I am, and am contented to be deemed, at least by such men, it became of some moment to them to discredit me with you. That I wished to be acceptable to you, that I have by all fair and honourable means studied to gain your good will, I appeal to the great Searcher of hearts, *who knows that I lie not*. That I have missed of my aim, none of you, alas! is so happy as not to know: and if it be through my own fault that my preferment among you, instead of being productive of permanent happiness, as I fondly hoped it would be, has become one of the heaviest calamities that ever befel me, even my enemies must be forced to allow that my faults cannot well have been greater than my sufferings have also been.

I have endeavoured to weigh the great and important

ant question now, alas ! put to the bloody arbitrament of the sword, with all the diligence, accuracy, and sincerity, of which I am capable. I undertook the enquiry with all the usual prepossessions in favour of the opinions which were popular. My interest evidently lay in my continuing to think, as many others (as wise and good as I can pretend to be) with whom I am happy to live in habits of friendship are contented to think. Ruin and misery seemed to stare me in the face, if I took a contrary course. Heretofore I had thought but little on such subjects. Contented to swim with the stream, I hastily, and with but little reflection, embraced those doctrines which are most flattering to human pride, and most natural to a youthful mind. Like the Armenian mentioned by Xenophon \*, “ I thought it a noble thing both to “ be free myself, and to leave liberty to my children.” And mistaking the impostor Licentiousness, the enemy of law, for that Constitutional Liberty, the child of law and her surest defence, I joined a giddy and numerous multitude, in declaiming as loud as the loudest in behalf of liberty, and against tyranny. With them, though, like the *confused assemblies* at Ephesus, *the more part of us knew not wherefore we were come together*, I too bowed at the altar of Liberty ; and sacrificed to this idol of our groves, *upon the high mountains, and upon the hills, and under every green tree* †.

\* . . . . “ Καλὸν γάρ μοι δοκεῖ εἶναι καὶ αὐτόν ἐλεύθερον εἶναι, καὶ “ πασιὶν Ἐλευθερίαν καταλιπεῖν.” — Xenoph. Cyropæd. lib. iii.

† I here allude to the part I took in the time of the Stamp Act.



With all these inducements to abide by the opinions most in vogue, which alone were familiar to me, in favour of which alone I had till lately never read any thing in any such manner as deserved the name of reading ; with all these discouragements against other doctrines, which I knew only by having always seen and heard them spoken against and despised as the obsolete and exploded reveries of dark and gloomy ages, and fit only for tyrants and slaves : with sincerity in my heart, and my Bible in my hand, I sat down to explore the truth. With these guides, and none but these, the process is not difficult. It has been owing chiefly to the sophistries of subtle controversialists, that the paths of politics have been entangled and rendered intricate. Aware that, in other departments of investigation not less important than these of politics, it had been the fate of other doctrines of indisputable verity to be violently run down and rejected, on very insufficient grounds, I was naturally led to reflect, that the case might be the same in these questions. It was fair to suppose that, in other periods of our history, men thought as closely and as clearly as they now do : I therefore sat down to read and to study what had been collected and laid down on the subject of government by writers who may now be regarded as ancients ; and who got their materials (not as, it is to be feared, their successors, the modern writers on politics, do from one another, or from their own fancies, but) from the only pure sources of information, the law of God, and the law of the land. The result of this course of read-  
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ing has been those Sermons, which, since these troubles began, I have from time to time preached in this parish, and for which it seems I am now to be sentenced to preach no more. My sincerity in thus endeavouring to settle my own faith is not to be questioned. I entered on the study for the express purpose of first instructing myself, that I might with more propriety afterwards instruct you. That all my conclusions are certainly true, it would be presumption in me to assert : but you should do me the justice to believe that I think they are true. And I seem to myself to have a right to object to any man's charging me with being mistaken, who has not himself gone through the same diligent, patient, and faithful process of enquiry that I have done. When any man of competent judgment, disinterestedness, and candour, shall have done this, if he does not subscribe to my doctrines, I am not afraid to pledge myself to subscribe to his.

I am ashamed to reply to many strange and random surmises which have been busily propagated as to my supposed inimicality to America, merely because I am not a native of America. It is folly to imagine, that, as an Englishman, interested in the welfare of England, I am not equally interested in the welfare of America. I cannot dissociate the idea of a perfect sameness of interest between the two countries, as much as between a parent and a child. It is true, I had the honor to be born in England ; and, though there are few things on which a man capable of any reflection can value himself less than I do on a circumstance

cumstance which is altogether a matter of accident ; yet I may be permitted to observe, and I hope without offence, that it is in this country, and in these times, that I have first, or ever, heard it urged as a reproach to any man that he was an Englishman. With respect to America, it has been the country of my choice. I am married in America ; and am settled in it, if I may have leave, most probably for life. I have property here, in common with others, who are permitted to enjoy it unmolested, though some of them are, and some are not, Americans by birth : my connexions and friends, whom I love as I do my own soul, are all of this country. Is there a person among you who can produce stronger ties of attachment to any country than these are ?

From scraps of conversation, ill understood, and worse related ; from mutilated passages of sermons, first heard with prejudice, and then commented on by ignorance, positive proof is said to have been obtained that I have preached up the doctrine of *unlimited obedience*. Could this charge really be proved, I should deserve to be proscribed the pale of common sense. It is surprising that men, who pretend to some accuracy both in speaking and thinking, should thus confound things and words so totally different as *unlimited obedience* and *passive obedience*. There never was a government so despotic as to exact the one, nor so unwise as not to enforce the other. Even here it is daily enforced : for, who knows not, that a breach of the law, which, in other words, is a *resistance* of the law, is, in many instances, punished with



death? In all instances, the violater of the laws *suffers* for so doing; excepting perhaps (as at present) in the cases of revolt and rebellion.

How am I to defend myself against accusations which are almost as absurd as they are malignant? Conscious that I neither hold, nor have ever maintained, any principles but such as are enjoined by the laws both of God and man, I wish I might be permitted to lay these much abused Sermons before the world, exactly as they have been delivered to you! There is another motive for forming this wish: having, some time since, thought it my duty to censure, with much freedom, two Discourses published by two respectable Clergymen, which had been distributed among you with uncommon industry, under the sanction of an authority now the highest in the province, it seems to be fair that the persons I then opposed should have as good an opportunity of defending their doctrines, as they had given me of objecting to them. But there is no occasion for my informing you that the press has long been shut against persons of my description, and against myself in particular.

I confess to you, there is something particularly ungrateful to my feelings, in being thus outlawed, and driven away from a country where I have so long lived with credit and comfort. When I but little deserved it, I experienced patronage and protection: it was only when I came to render the best offices in my power to your country that I met with the worst returns. For these efforts to do good, I have been attacked openly, and undermined secretly; ruined by  
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the enemies of government, without being either pitied or praised by it's friends. In short, to borrow the words of a great man\*, "my life hath been threatened, and my name libelled; which I count an honour. But these are the practices of those whose despairs are dangerous; but yet not so dangerous as their hopes†."

I close all with the pathetic words of one who was as great even as Lord Verulam in his life, and greater in his fall—with an extract from the Sermon which Abp. Laud delivered on the scaffold before his martyrdom.

"I am not in love with this passage through the red sea: for, I have the weaknesse and infirmities of flesh and blood plentifully about me; and I have prayed, with my Saviour, that this cup might pass from me! but, if not, God's will, not mine, be done! I shall most willingly drink of this cup as deep as he pleases, and enter into this sea; yea, and pass through it in the way that he shall lead.

\* Lord Bacon, in his Letter to Queen Elizabeth.

† Roger North, in his Life of Lord Keeper Guilford, thus vindicates the subject of his Memoirs from similar calumnies:

"His Lordship was perfectly at ease in the conscience of his behaviour; and scorned the vulgar and fanatic calumnies, that he was a Prerogative man, and laboured to set up arbitrary power. But, notwithstanding all that, he laboured as much as he could to set up the just prerogatives of the Crown, which were well known in the Law, and to the Lawyers; although it had been much the fashion, as well in Westminster-Hall as at St. Stephens, to set light by the prerogative. He has said, that a man could not be a good Lawyer and honest, but he must be a Prerogative man; so plain were the Law-books in these cases."

"But

“ But I would have it remembered, good people,  
 “ that when God’s servants were in this boisterous  
 “ sea, and Aaron amongst them, the Egyptians, which  
 “ persecuted them, and did in a manner drive them  
 “ into the sea, were drowned in the same waters  
 “ while they were in pursuit of them. I know,  
 “ *my God whom I serve*, is as able to deliver me from  
 “ the sea of blood, as he was to deliver the three chil-  
 “ dren from the furnace ; and, I humbly thank my  
 “ Saviour for it ! my resolution is now as theirs was  
 “ then. They would not *worship the image the King*  
 “ *had set up*, nor will I the imaginations which the  
 “ People are setting up ; nor will I forsake the tem-  
 “ ple and the truth of God, to follow the bleating of  
 “ Jeroboam’s calves in Dan and Bethel. And as for  
 “ this People, they are miserably misled : God, of  
 “ his mercy, open their eyes, that they may see the  
 “ right way ! for, at this time, the *blind lead the*  
 “ *blind* ; and if they go on, *both will certainly fall*  
 “ *into the ditch.*”

And now, thanking you, as from my heart I do,  
 for the respectful attention with which so many of  
 you have long listened to me ; and, with the warmest  
 cordiality, wishing you *patience under your sufferings,*  
*and a happy issue out of all your afflictions,* I take my  
 leave of you for a season. Brethren, farewell ! Be  
 perfect ; be of good comfort ; be of one mind ; live in  
 peace ; and the God of love and peace shall be with you !





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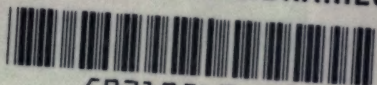
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